YOUTH MENTORING AND ADULT-YOUTH RELATIONSHIPS: THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTEXT

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Research Masters With Training of Murdoch University, February 2009
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work that has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

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Miriam Brooker
ABSTRACT

This study is about programmes that foster adult-youth relationships and more specifically about the community context necessary for such programmes to flourish. The study is designed to explore a faith-based community context in which a youth mentoring programme is being considered as a strategy to help develop adult-youth relationships and youth participation in the community. The focus of this research is an Anglican parish in Perth, Western Australia. The study evaluates whether mentoring would be the most appropriate adult-youth programme intervention to facilitate parish ministry to its young people.

Three literatures related to formal adult-youth programmes including youth mentoring, intergenerational and youth-adult partnerships inform the study. Key programme characteristics and theoretical models related to the three literatures are identified, as well as recommended practices or behaviours associated with the development of effective adult-youth relationships.

The study methodology emphasises wide consultation and elicits the perceptions and expectations of participants regarding youth mentoring and youth participation. Illuminative evaluation, action research and mixed methods approaches are integrated and combined within the study, incorporating a range of data sources to be compared and contrasted to identify adult and youth needs and to produce recommendations pertinent to the parish context. A sociocultural approach to data analysis and interpretation, as outlined by Barbara Rogoff, is employed to foreground interpersonal relationships in the parish whilst also considering individual and cultural-institutional planes of analysis.
Youth participation is identified to be an adult need given the anxiety of many study participants about the future of the parish and their valuing of a community incorporating all age groups. Despite generally positive participant expectations of mentoring as an intervention, study findings indicate that a formal youth-adult activity programme would be more likely to respond to the needs of all young people connected to the parish. Mentoring is identified to be one potential form of youth-adult activity that could be included, as well as being a form of relationship that could develop naturally. The study includes four main recommendations regarding preparatory activities intended to support the design and implementation of an effective parish adult-youth programme: (1) Address barriers to communication between youth and adults; (2) Be aware of power differences between adults and youth; (3) Be open to supporting youth-initiated change; and (4) Develop a shared vision for youth participation in the parish. Overall, lessons learned from the youth mentoring, intergenerational and adult-youth partnership literatures suggest that a focus on mutuality and reciprocity between youth and adults is most beneficial for the development of ongoing relationships.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This study is about programmes that foster adult-youth relationships and more specifically about the community context necessary for such programmes to flourish. Within the study I explore the literature related to youth-adult relationship development within formal programmes in order to identify facilitative and supportive actions and processes at the organisational/community level. The literature and investigations at the research site help to frame recommendations for the faith-based community context in which a youth mentoring programme is being considered as a strategy to help develop youth-adult relationships and youth participation in that community.

Significance of the study

Ensuring quality mentoring for young people is an important imperative for practitioners and researchers alike. Rhodes and DuBois (2006) outline findings that quality mentoring programmes assist some young people, but that research evidence and support are not able to establish wholesale support for the effectiveness of youth mentoring programmes. Jean Rhodes states that,

As we move toward gaining a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics of mentoring, it will be important to take into account not only differences among youth, but also the family, the community, and cultural circumstances that may foster and shape mentoring relationships. (Rhodes, 2005, p. 31)

Youth mentoring programmes are often directed at youth identified as being at-risk in the community, particularly since a positive relationship with a
A significant other has been identified to promote resilience for young people from vulnerable backgrounds (Social Mentoring Research Group, 2007). Therefore, community-based youth mentoring programmes tend to focus on protecting young people and improving their resilience (Beltman & MacCallum, 2006; Rhodes, 1994) rather than on improving relations between youth and adults per se. A particular contribution of this dissertation to scholarly knowledge is the exploration of mentoring programmes as a possible means of promoting more meaningful adult-youth relationships. (With reference to the wider adult-youth relationship programme literature.)

Due to the need to consider research and practice that focuses upon youth-adult programs in small community or organisational settings, this study refers to three adult-youth programme literatures: youth mentoring, intergenerational programmes and youth-adult partnerships.

The Research Site

The site of this research is an Anglican Parish within the Perth metropolitan area (Western Australia). Parish member perceptions of youth mentoring as an intervention, including its potentiality for facilitating youth ministry goals and benefits for young people and adults of all ages are explored. The quality of parish adult-youth relationships in the present (2006) and past are considered based on the accounts of parish members (both young and older) as well as through observations and documentary evidence. Perceptions and expectations concerning youth participation in the parish are considered within the study to identify areas of commonality and difference between the views of
adults and those of young people. Adult and youth needs are identified to ensure that they are incorporated within the proposed programme and recommendations are made to develop the organisational/community context in a way that is supportive of programme implementation and effectiveness.

The parish constitutes an established small community that has historically included all age groups in regular contact and interaction. A number of older members have attended church services in the parish for most of their lives. However, similar to many traditional church congregations, the parish now struggles to attract and retain a significant youth presence. Parish activity occurs at two church sites (in neighbouring suburbs), a hall and an office complex. Three regular church services are offered each Sunday (7:45am, 8:00am and 9:30am). A small number of young people attend the 9:30am service on Sundays.

During 2004 the parish appointed a Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator (CYMC) who was employed to facilitate a stronger children and youth ministry within the parish. The CYMC reported a lack of suitable religious/spiritual programmes available for the 12 to 25 years age group, as s/he wanted to implement a programme that allowed young people to determine their own faith needs and directions. The CYMC was considering mentoring as a possible youth ministry initiative and since I had an academic interest in this area I successfully negotiated this thesis topic between the parish and Murdoch University.

My involvement in this study stemmed from my parish membership. During 2004 the CYMC and I worked collaboratively to establish a new children’s ministry programme (Godly Play). I assisted with the development of
a formative evaluation study for Godly Play as part of my Postgraduate Diploma of Policy Studies (Murdoch University, Perth). Given that this evaluation had proved useful in setting up a successful parish programme, the CYMC was open to my involvement in assisting with the development and implementation of a mentoring programme aimed at parish young people.

A parish visioning statement concerning its ministry to children and young people serves as an important reference-point within the study.

The parish desires to integrate its Children and Youth Ministry with the faith (worshipping) community. It seeks to make its Ministry sustainable within the parish and it seeks to develop meaningful relationships between younger and older people. (Visioning Days Summary, Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator, 2006)

The study provides a forum for parish members to express their perceptions, expectations and experiences regarding youth participation in various aspects of parish life as well as the ways that mentoring might benefit younger people and older people. This process was undertaken to guide programme development and implementation with a view to furthering parish-identified goals.

Youth in the Anglican Church

The research study is set within the context of the wider Anglican Church where young people are generally disengaging from attendance at church services (Webber, 2006). It is readily apparent that low numbers of young people attending church has implications for the viability of worshipping communities into the future.
‘The Spirit of Generation Y’ research project (2003-2006) examined spirituality amongst Australian young people through in-depth interviews and a national survey (Mason, Singleton, & Webber, 2007). With regard to Anglican youth, one of the researchers, Ruth Webber (2006), stated that, “…25 percent of those raised Anglican now do not identify with any denomination. A mere 19 percent of those who still identify with the Anglican Church attend services at least once a month” p. 2/3). For Anglican and Uniting young people no longer attending church the main reasons were: being too busy, church was perceived to be irrelevant to their lives, they disagreed with official church teachings on some moral issues and they had experienced less than positive experiences at church such as boredom, unfriendly people and few other young people (Webber, 2006). Webber summarised that, “Twice as many females as males claimed that the main reason for non-attendance was related to unpleasant encounters with church members who were unwelcoming and unfriendly and in some cases quite nasty to them” p. 2/3).

An Anglican Church published report concerning the spirituality of English young people concluded that,

Young people hate the hypocrisy they see in some churchgoers who do not practice the love that they preach. On the rare occasions that young people do go to church they often feel no connection with other members of the congregation who are usually a lot older than them, and whose expression of faith does not match the young people’s stage of development – church services sometimes demand too much of young people. (Savage, Collins-Mayo, Mayo & Cray, 2006, p. 14)

The above quotes suggest that adult-youth interactions have an important impact on the willingness of young people to engage with church communities. Therefore, although anxiety about the future of the Anglican church is likely to be part of the parish’s motivation for attending to its adult-youth relationships,
this study is not directly concerned with the issue of increasing the church attendance of young people. Instead, this study focuses on the perceptions, expectations and experiences of young people and adults in a particular parish with a view to improving relationships between them through the establishment of a formal programme intervention. The question of youth participation in the community of the parish is the focus, rather than limiting consideration to participation in church services alone.

Youth Mentoring

Youth mentoring is a strategy with inherent appeal since at the core of mentoring is a special positive affective bond between the generations. Jean Rhodes states that youth mentoring involves “… a relationship between an older, more experienced adult and an unrelated, younger protégé—a relationship in which the adult provides ongoing guidance, instruction, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the protégé” (Rhodes, 2002, p. 3). Strong mentoring relationships are more likely to result when they are characterised by empathy, authenticity, positive regard, companionship and collaborative working relationships (Spencer, 2006, 2004).

Youth mentoring is a popular initiative in the United States of America (USA) where the well-known ‘Big Brother, Big Sister’ programme was launched in 1904. Big Brother Big Sister currently operates in all 50 states within the USA and in twelve countries around the world (Big Brothers Big Sisters, n.d.). Youth mentoring in the USA includes local initiatives, not-for-profit organizations, corporations, legislative initiatives and government support
(DuBois & Karcher, 2005). Three million young people are in formal one-on-one mentoring relationships in the USA, whilst many more are reported to want or need mentors (MENTOR, 2009). Jean Rhodes comments that, “This dramatic expansion in youth mentoring speaks volumes about the faith our society places in one-to-one relationships between vulnerable young people and nonrelated but caring adults” (Rhodes, 2002, p. 1). It is significant that youth mentoring in the USA focuses upon at-risk young people and this will be expanded upon in Chapter 2 (Literature Review) of this thesis.

Youth mentoring within the Australian context has not experienced the breadth or the long history apparent in the USA and it has a different flavour to youth mentoring there. Mentoring in Australia does not always focus upon youth identified as at-risk and is characterised by programme diversity (Hartley, 2004b) with a number of programmes focusing on young people who have already successfully transitioned from school to university or the workplace (Tobin, 2000). Nevertheless mentoring is a generally well-known phenomenon in Australia. The national ‘Youth Mentoring Network’ includes 107 youth mentoring programmes including 16,000 young people throughout Australia (Youth Mentoring Network, n.d.).

Mentoring is also an initiative that is perceived to have much to offer young people in the Australian context. An Australian report entitled ‘Young people and mentoring: towards a national strategy’ (2004) stated that, Mentoring...has considerable potential to improve understanding and communication across different age groups and to strengthen common bonds between generations at a time when there is potential for divisiveness. In addition, quality mentoring for young people contributes to networking and community strengthening, builds on and enhances youth development frameworks and positively focuses on young people’s skills and contributions to society. (Hartley, 2004a, p.3)
The above quote portrays mentoring as an initiative that not only assists youth development, but also the development of relationships within intergenerational and community contexts. Within the Australian context, mentoring would appear to be extremely relevant to a parish community seeking to improve its adult-youth relationships and to increase the involvement of young people in their worshipping community.

The Importance of Pre-Implementation Studies and of Community Context

The parish context is an important focus in this study because a community’s context is considered to have an important influence on study design as well as how likely a particular programme is to be effective (given its intended purposes).

A number of context dimensions might be considered, but the interpersonal characteristics of the parish setting are of interest in this study, particularly youth-adult relationships and youth participation. Tineka Abma (2006) states that, “…the social relations in a program context are at least partly constitutive of program quality and effectiveness…[that is] the relational quality of the interactions that take place as the program is implemented in context” (p. 190). This study takes a proactive stance toward parish adult-youth relationships and asks if any interventions could be made prior to a programme’s implementation that would improve its effectiveness.

Stufflebeam’s Context, Input, Process, Product (CIPP) Model provides for an evaluation of context, including guidance for “…identifying needed interventions and choosing and ranking goals (based on assessing needs,
problems, assets, and opportunities)” (Stufflebeam, McKee, & McKee, 2003, p. 6). Within this study one purpose is to identify significant needs and issues for adults and young people around their relations with one another and youth participation in the parish so that mutually beneficial and desirable parish initiatives can be developed that take account of both groups. The proposed parish-based mentoring programme is considered with regard to adult and youth needs in order to evaluate its likelihood of support or success given the interpersonal context of the parish.

The Australian National Youth Mentoring Benchmarks (2007) are framed with the statement that “Quality mentoring programs require hard work and tough decisions.’ (p. 1). This document goes on to emphasise that an important aspect of ensuring quality mentoring programmes is through thorough pre-programme planning, including needs-analysis and research (Youth Mentoring Network, 2007).

The Research Approaches Employed

An action research approach was initially employed within this study with a view to engaging parish members in research activities and programme development. This included setting up a steering committee comprised of parish-connected people from a range of age groups to guide the research process. This group assisted with the formation of a parish survey designed to gather information from the worshipping community about youth mentoring and youth participation.
As the study unfolded I discovered that although some parish members were willing to have input into the design and focus of the research or programme, they were reluctant to assume responsibility for its implementation. However, the exercise of trying to establish an action research approach to this study revealed some important aspects of parish culture and these are outlined within Chapter 3 (Methodology) of this thesis.

My intention to employ an action research approach within this study led me to adopt the cycle of ‘plan, act, observe and reflect’ as a guide for my own work as a researcher. I was guided by the practical type of action research outlined by Zuber-Skerritt (1992), which emphasises a researcher/facilitator role of encouraging participation and self-reflection and a relationship with participants based on cooperation and “process consultancy” (p. 12). After implementing a parish survey I observed that it had not incorporated all young people connected with the parish and I considered it important to do so. Alongside the difficulty of implementing an action research approach within the parish, this led to a change of research approach.

An Illuminative Evaluation approach (Hamilton, 2005; Parlett & Hamilton, 1972) was subsequently adopted because it encourages multiple methods of data collection (mainly qualitative) in order to access or ‘illuminate’ complex interpersonal interactions. This approach also facilitates an understanding of the interplay between cultural, social, institutional and psychological variables within the programme context since they are considered to affect the way that the actual programme or ‘innovation’ operates. Applying this approach to the study context prior to programme implementation was a
valuable exercise because of its potential to illuminate interpersonal aspects of the context that might assist with programme design and implementation.

When the illuminative evaluation approach is employed in a pre-programme implementation context it operates very similarly to a needs analysis. Understanding the needs of programme recipients can serve to gauge how well a programme is performing later since it involves asking how well the programme met those needs (Davidson, 2005). Within this study, understanding the needs of youth and adults in the parish context assists with identifying mutually beneficial pre-programme and programme interventions.

A range of data has been collected within this study in order to identify participant perceptions and expectations with regard to youth mentoring and youth participation. The data gathered include a parish-wide survey, interviews, focus groups, observations and documentary evidence and this information is presented in Chapter 4 (Results).

The Conceptual Approach

Theory in the area of youth mentoring is relatively embryonic and there is still much to be learned about how youth mentoring operates in varying contexts and with youth from different backgrounds (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). Theory development within the youth mentoring arena is often guided by theoretical work from other disciplines and this can be very useful when considering different contexts and groups of young people (DuBois & Karcher, 2005).

Social constructivism is considered to be a very appropriate paradigm to guide this study given its concern with how people within a context or setting
have “constructed” reality (Patton, 2002, p. 96). A focus upon beliefs, expectations and perceptions as well as the impact of these constructions upon others within a setting is characteristic of such a perspective (Patton, 2002). A sociocultural perspective takes particular account of the mutual interplay between the individual and their social and cultural-historical context in order to understand human development (Rogoff, 2003). From this perspective, the self is viewed as being “…embedded within sociocultural contexts and intrinsically interwoven with them” (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 2004, p. 475). Application of this perspective within the study enables me to explore the ways that young people and adults inter-relate within a particular community context and how this shapes the participation of young people. The findings of this study are discussed in Chapter 5 (Discussion), where I make specific recommendations to the parish regarding priorities for the parish to address prior to programme design and implementation.

Definition of Terms

Youth

For the purposes of this study youth will be defined as people aged between 12 and 25 years inclusively. This definition was developed in consultation with the parish and is intended to capture the transitions from primary school to high school and from high school to work, training or study. Parish ministry to young people often begins as they enter high school and may continue on past graduation from high school. This is also the definition of
Mentoring

This study defines mentoring-like relationships as “non-parental relationships where a more experienced person provides support and guidance to a less experienced person” (Parish Survey, Appendix 1). This definition is in keeping with that adopted by Mentoring Australia (2000) whereby mentoring is defined as “a mutually beneficial relationship which involves a more experienced person helping a less experienced person to identify and achieve their goals” (Hartley, 2004b, p. 22). With regard to youth mentoring, Hartley (2004b) also stated that, “Many people can identify with someone other than their parents who nurtured, guided and supported them…” (p. 22). Therefore this study incorporates relationships with extended family members other than parents. The definition of ‘mentoring-like relationships’ provided in the parish was deliberately broad so that study participants could identify for themselves what they considered to be the important aspects of mentoring within their own community context.

Participation

The term ‘integrate’ (as used by the parish) has been replaced with the term ‘participate’ for the purposes of this study. Participation is the formal term used within the academic and youth literature and within the context of youth development the term refers to “activities through which young people have opportunities to make meaningful decisions, develop and practice leadership skills, and experience a sense of belonging or mattering” (Community Network
for Youth Development, 2006, p. 4/4). Within the parish survey and during interviews and focus groups the term participation was presented as an open question so that parish members could identify for themselves what the term meant to them. Therefore, the study considers both the extent of youth participation and kinds of youth participation in the parish.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The belief that young people benefit from the guidance and involvement of non-familial adults in their lives is not new, and a number of social research studies have found evidence to support this contention (Grossman & Bulle, 2006). This review of the adult-youth programme literature draws on three main literatures: youth mentoring programmes, intergenerational programmes and youth-adult partnership programmes. Although the literature is somewhat diverse, a common theme is concern about the growing distance between young people and adults or older people in contemporary society and the negative effects of this on young people, older people and communities. The argument is commonly made that strong adult-youth relationships protect young people as well as promoting wider organisational and community benefits (Kaplan, 2001; Rhodes, 2002; Zeldin, Larson, Camino & O’Connor, 2005).

This review primarily focuses upon programmes that occur in the context of community organisations. The review considers the ways that youth-adult relationships are approached in each of the three programme literatures identified above. ¹ Initially, each of these literatures is introduced separately with regard to its programme design and implementation (key definitions, scope, aims and assumptions). This is followed by an integrated discussion of the various theoretical approaches that underpin adult-youth programmes where I discuss the contribution of theory to our understanding of adult-youth relationships and the implementation of effective adult-youth programmes. Barbara Rogoff’s

¹ There is some intersection among the three literature areas as some youth mentoring programmes and some youth-adult partnerships are intergenerational in nature.
sociocultural approach is adopted as an appropriate analytical framework for this study because of its alignment with the theoretical approaches discussed.

Rogoff’s framework facilitates a foregrounding of the relational or interpersonal plane of analysis while still accounting for individual and community planes. Reference to the combined literatures helps to identify pre-programme and programme implementation activities that support the development of good youth-adult relationships. Adult attitudes and behaviours that have been shown to be helpful are also outlined. I assume that consideration of these factors is essential to solid preparation for the development of a programme that will promote effective adult-youth relationships.

This chapter is complex since it explores and integrates three adult-youth programme literatures. Figure 1 provides an advance organiser for the chapter.

![Figure 1. Structure of the Literature Review Chapter.](image-url)
Youth Mentoring Programmes

Definitions of mentoring vary somewhat, but common elements include that: (a) the mentor is someone with more wisdom or experience, (b) the mentor fosters the growth and development of the mentee through guidance and instruction, and (c) the relationship includes an emotional bond characterised by trust (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). Youth mentoring is often defined as “a relationship between an older, more experienced adult and an unrelated, younger protégé—a relationship in which the adult provides ongoing guidance, instruction, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the protégé” (Rhodes, 2002, p. 3). This definition of youth mentoring is conventional and assumes that it is always the older person who has more wisdom or experience. However, young people can and do serve as experts in areas such as computing or the media where they have more knowledge and skill than older people (Kessler & Staudinger, 2007; MacCallum et al., 2006).

An important feature of the youth mentoring relationship that may develop over time is “a special bond of mutual commitment, respect, identification and loyalty which facilitates the youth’s transition into adulthood” (Rhodes, 2002, p. 4). A majority of youth mentoring relationships develop naturally in settings where young people and adults spend significant amounts of time together, but they can also be established more formally where adults and young people are brought together through specific programmes or organisations (DuBois & Karcher).

Most of the existing research on youth mentoring programmes concerns ‘traditional’, community-based mentoring programmes. As a result this type of
mentoring appears to be prevalent within the youth mentoring field. Within community-based mentoring programmes, pairs of unrelated adults and young people regularly meet in-person, the adult volunteer mentors the young person, and the adult and young person are free to choose when and where to meet and what they will do (Baker & Maguire, 2005; Rhodes & DuBois, 2006; Rhodes, Grossman & Roffman, 2002; Sipe, 2005). An example of this kind of mentoring programme is provided through the international youth mentoring organisation, Big Brother Big Sister. Although the mentor and young person choose their own activities, the organisation retains control over who is included in the programme, its purposes, coordination, mentor training and monitoring. However, this form of youth mentoring is in the minority compared with other forms of mentoring that occur in group situations and in programmes with broader purposes and is by no means the most prevalent (DuBois & Karcher, 2005).

The literature on youth mentoring reflects that most traditional community-based programmes target at-risk young people. Historically, community-based youth mentoring has sought to assist disadvantaged youth through the involvement of a caring, unrelated adult who can provide role modelling, support or guidance (Baker & Maguire, 2005; Freedman, 1993). A key assumption is that this kind of intervention enhances the development of vulnerable young people when they form a close relationship with their mentor that “deepen[s] with time” (Rhodes, 2002, p. 38).

Within the youth mentoring literature, the terms at-risk, vulnerable or disadvantaged are applied to youth with a variety of backgrounds or experiences
that include risk factors\textsuperscript{2}. These include: coming from a low-income family (Rhodes et al., 2002), having an emotional or behavioural disorder (DuBois, Neville, Para & Pugh-Lilly, 2002), getting involved with drug dealers and gang leaders (Rhodes, 2002), teen-pregnancy, living in a single-parent family (De Wit et al., 2007), experiencing the divorce or separation of parents, experiencing a family history of substance abuse or domestic violence, or being the victim of physical, emotional or sexual abuse (Grossman & Tierney, 1998). Additionally, there are often substantial differences between the backgrounds of young people and their mentors in traditional mentoring relationships, with most mentors having higher socio-economic status than their protégés (Grossman & Tierney, 1998).

In recent years, formal youth mentoring programmes have become increasingly diverse, including a variety of forms such as mentoring over the Internet, group, team-based and peer mentoring (Sipe, 2005). In addition, mentoring programmes that occur on a particular site are increasing in popularity (Rhodes, 2002). Site-based mentoring programmes can occur at workplaces, educational institutions, religious organisations, hospitals, clinics or community agencies (Hartley, 2004a; Karcher, Kuperminc, Portwood, Sipe & Taylor, 2006), but most occur in schools (Rhodes, 2002). Because site-based mentoring programmes are closely linked to the organisations that host them, they are likely to involve more specific meeting times and activities compared with traditional community-based programmes (Herrera, Sipe & McClanahan, 2000; Rhodes, 2002). However, the overall goal of reaching at-risk young people is not

\textsuperscript{2} “Risk factors refer to the deficits in young people’s environments which researchers believe put them “at risk” for engaging in problem behavior and/or having difficulty achieving positive outcomes as young adults” (Community Network for Youth Development, 2006, p. 3/4).
different since school-based programmes tend to target young people at-risk of academic failure or dropping out of school, attracting older retired volunteers to serve as mentors (Herrera et al., 2000).

The youth mentoring literature is currently limited in reflecting the breadth and diversity of youth mentoring programmes, including the effectiveness of the variations in form and site mentioned above. Rhodes and DuBois (2006) note that this gap in the literature needs to be addressed in order for the youth mentoring field to progress. DuBois and colleagues also acknowledged the need for research and evaluation methods that are responsive to the increasing complexity of youth mentoring initiatives (DuBois, Yates, Silverthorn & Tebes, 2006).

The current study involves both adults and youth from an affluent metropolitan suburb. Most of the young people included in this study attend schools with good standing, have good health and come from supportive families with access to a range of resources and extra-familial supports. They would not be considered at-risk socially, academically or economically. Both adults and youth in this study come from the same socio-economic grouping and live in the same geographical area. In addition, this study explores the potential for implementing a formal mentoring programme at a specific site (an Anglican parish). Given the current study’s focus, mentoring variations of interest would include: group mentoring (where one adult mentors a group a young people), team mentoring (where a group of adults may mentor a group of young people) (DuBois & Karcher, 2005) or mentoring programmes where young people mentor adults (this variation sits outside of traditional definitions of youth mentoring). The existing youth mentoring literature is limited in its ability to
provide information on the effectiveness of these kinds of programmes with young people who are not considered to be at-risk.

The extant youth mentoring literature has relevance to this study given its focus on identifying formal programme features that support the development of trusting emotional bonds between young people and adults. Its limitations include its overall focus on traditional youth mentoring initiatives and benefits for young people deemed to be at-risk (which leaves benefits to adults largely unexamined). It is therefore useful to consider research literature that explores the development of adult-youth relationships from other perspectives, illustrating alternative forms of adult-youth relationships (not referred to as mentoring), since these may serve to illuminate some of the gaps in the youth mentoring literature. In this vein, I consider the intergenerational field next since it focuses on relationships between adults and young people that cross the generations.

Intergenerational Programmes

The intergenerational field incorporates a wide range of research and programme types with varying purposes, contexts and definitions; but most consider or facilitate the interaction of people across generations (i.e., the generations involved are not consecutive) (Sanchez, et al., 2006). By definition, the intergenerational field includes both family and non-family relationships. Most intergenerational research has focused on naturally occurring family relationships such as between children or young people and grandparents. However, most formal programmes involve young people who are 21 years of age or younger building relationships with non-familial older people aged 55 years or over (MacCallum et al., 2006) or 60 years and over (Kaplan, 2001).
Programmes of this nature have relevance to the current study because the parish concerned provides a location where young people can potentially interact with a large number of unrelated older adults. However, intergenerational programmes do not incorporate the whole spectrum of youth-adult relationships that could potentially occur within the parish setting. In addition, information about the effectiveness of these kinds of programmes is limited since “Compared with the rapidly growing number and variety of intergenerational programs in communities internationally, the number of documented evaluation and research studies is not keeping pace” (Kuehne, 2003a, p. 146).

Programme-facilitated contact between young people and older adults can occur in a range of settings including schools (Kuehne, 2003b), adult day care centres (Meschel & McGlynn, 2004), universities (Goff, 2004), residential homes for the aged (Jones, Herrick & York, 2004), hospitals, community organisations and places of worship (Kaplan, 2001). No matter where they occur, intergenerational programmes focus on age-related features or benefits for one or both of the generational groups (Kaplan, 2001).

Intergenerational programmes include a range of motivations from “doing something for others” to collaboration or learning alongside others (Sanchez et al, 2007, p. 51). A range of examples is presented below.

A number of intergenerational programmes that involve young people relating with older adults have focused on ameliorating youth attitudes or stereotypes about older people (Meshele & McGlynn, 2004). The intention has generally been for contact between individual representatives of the two generations to result in more positive attitudes toward old people (as a group), or
toward ageing itself, on the part of youth. The rationale behind these programmes assumes that perceptions of older people as a group can have an important bearing on the quality of intergenerational interactions, as well as on attitudes towards ageing (Meshel & McGlynn, 2004). Promoting positive intergenerational attitudes in both directions is relevant to the current study as these attitudes are likely to influence and affect successful programme implementation.

Another kind of intergenerational programme that involves a focus on the needs of the older person is one where young people serve older people in a voluntary capacity. Such programmes include assisting older people who are housebound (Osborne & Bullock, 2000) and visiting programmes (O'Sullivan, 2002). Such programmes seek to provide material supports as well as social-emotional ones such as companionship. Despite the focus on service to older people some benefits have been identified for the young people involved, such as developing skills and receiving training, developing compassion and empathy and realising the importance of friendships across the generations (Osborne & Bullock, 2000). Programmes of this nature are relevant to the current study because they indicate that service-like activities can promote positive adult-youth relationships that benefit both generations.

More recently a greater number of intergenerational programmes have overtly sought to promote benefits for both generations, focusing on the benefits and supports that each can offer and find in the other. A variety of rationales for these kinds of reciprocal benefits can be identified in the literature, including that: (a) both the young and the old are more dependent or socially isolated than other generations and that it makes inherent sense for them to be brought
together so that they can share resources (Jones et al., 2004; Kaplan, 2001); (b) demographic changes have led to separation and between-generation conflict and so more opportunities need to be created to bring different generations together (Hatton-Yeo & Ohsako, 1999; O'Sullivan, 2002); (c) interactions between young and old can help to meet older peoples’ interest in establishing and guiding the next generation (generativity) and the identity-formation needs in younger people (Kessler & Staudinger, 2007); (d) intergenerational contact in a service-learning environment can assist both young and old develop intergenerational relationship skills as well as learning and benefiting from the programme activity itself (Goff, 2004); and (e) young people can learn about skills, traditions and history whilst older people have their knowledge and experience valued (MacCallum et al., 2006). Intergenerational exchange programmes are particularly pertinent to the current study because of their emphasis on the reciprocity that can occur in adult-youth relationships. I am assuming that if both generational groups benefit from the interaction, they will be more likely to value it and describe it in positive terms.

The intergenerational field has recently begun expanding its focus beyond programme boundaries, to include “social and institutional policies, cultural and community practices, and environmental design endeavours that aim to promote intergenerational engagement” (Kaplan, Liu & Radhakrishn, 2003, p. 407; Kaplan, 2001). For example, this broader approach involved building the capacity of an institution to conduct intergenerational programmes rather than developing and implementing a finite programme (Kaplan, Liu & Hannon, 2006). Within the Australian context, the first research study to consider adult-
youth programmes in intergenerational and community development terms was conducted in 2006 (MacCallum et al., 2006).

A broadened intergenerational focus has interesting implications including the ways that pre-existing organisational or community conditions may or may not facilitate intergenerational exchange. Such a broad concept has great relevance to the current study, which concerns itself with a small community context and the way that intergenerational attitudes and expectations might potentially assist or hinder adult-youth relationships. In addition, the intergenerational programme field is also developing an interest in how intergenerational programmes can have positive effects in the community. Youth-older adult interactions and exchanges are thus seen to have the potential to contribute not only personal and interpersonal benefits; they can also contribute to stronger communities (Kaplan, 2001).

Overall, the intergenerational literature is helpful to the current study, because it balances the youth mentoring literature’s focus on benefits to the young person. In focusing on benefits to older people, some of the supports and resources that younger people can offer to adults are highlighted. Attention to both youth and older adult exchanges and benefits highlights that youth-adult relationships are often mutual and reciprocal. In addition, the intergenerational literature examines the potential of an interaction between two people in a non-familial relationship leading to changes in attitudes and stereotypes about an age-defined group. Even though the focus was upon changing attitudes towards older people it is assumed here that intergenerational interactions also have the potential to change negative attitudes and stereotypes about younger people.
An area that is not generally considered within the intergenerational literature is whether it benefits programme participants to be involved in planning or directing programme activities (Kuehne, 2003a). As with traditional youth mentoring programmes, decisions about programme purposes are often made by a coordinating organisation, but unlike traditional youth mentoring programmes the activities that young people and older people engage in are often also chosen for them in intergenerational programmes. It is my view that with regard to both generational groups, input regarding programme activities and planning could assist in enhancing their sense of participation in not only the programme, but in the organisation or community as well, thus increasing a sense of personal agency and contribution. The adult-youth partnership literature will be presented next because it offers a focus upon the development of youth involvement and agency, which has implications for organisational and community development.

**Youth-Adult Partnerships**

Youth-adult partnerships are collaborative, involving youth and adults working together on common issues or concerns and community action; these partnerships are characterised by democratic and consensus-based decision-making processes and shared power (Ginwright, 2005; Zeldin, Camino & Mook, 2005; Zeldin, Petrokubi & MacNeil, 2008). Youth-adult partnerships differ from mentoring relationships in that they are not typically one-on-one and the adult does not primarily shape the relationship through role modelling; adult-youth partnerships are often oriented towards achieving collective and group goals (Ginwright, 2005) and include mutuality in teaching and learning (Camino,
Youth-adult partnerships differ from intergenerational relationships in that they bring adults and youth together through shared concerns or interests that focus beyond the needs of any particular generation(s). They also differ because with regard to youth-adult partnerships, there is no limit regarding how close in age the youth and adults concerned are. The literature concerning youth-adult partnerships is very relevant to the current study because it incorporates groups of youth and adults working together on issues that concern them in their own communities and beyond. The study context of an Anglican parish provides many opportunities for such collaboration and partnership to occur between wide ranges of differently aged adults and young people.

Youth-adult partnerships are found in a range of private and public organisations that serve young people in the USA, such as the Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development (Camino, 2005), the Youth Leadership Institute (Libby et al., 2005), 4-H Youth Development (Zeldin et al., 2008), the Parks and Recreation Department and The Adolescent Health Division (Schulman, 2006). Sometimes schools seek to implement youth-adult partnership processes also (Camino, 2005; Mitra, 2005, 2008). Advocates identify a range of reasons for establishing youth-adult partnerships, including that: “youth can be active agents in their own development, the development of others, and the development of the community” (Zeldin, Larson et al., 2005, p. 2), and that youth-adult partnerships “may strengthen the culture, structure, and programming of youth organizations and schools” (Lawrence-Jacobson, 2006, p. 263). Youth-adult partnership programmes are not common within the Australian context at this time. Two recent Australia-based youth-adult partnership projects were described or referred to within the youth-adult
partnership literature originating from the USA (Mitra, 2008; Wang, 2006), which suggests that they are just starting to be implemented within the Australian context.

Youth-adult partnerships incorporate the social justice principles of youth participation. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 12) establishes that all children and young people: (1) are capable of expressing a view; (2) have the right to express their views freely; (3) have the right to be heard in all matters affecting them; (4) have the right to have their views taken seriously; and (5) in accordance with their age and maturity (Lansdowne, 2001, p. 2). In a similar vein, O’Donoghue, Kirshner and McLaughlin define youth participation as “…a constellation of activities that empower adolescents to take part in and influence decision making that affects their lives and to take action on issues they care about” (O’Donoghue et al., 2002). When youth participation is effective it has been found to have positive impacts on youth and adults as well as on organisations and communities (Zeldin, McDaniel, Topitzes & Calvert, 2000), but in order to be effective it needs to be “…embedded in institutions and processes that influence young people’s everyday lives” (O’Donoghue et al., 2002, p. 18).

Youth-adult partnerships are described in the literature as being innovative because they involve a process rather than a prescribed practice; therefore they include experimentation and adjustment (Camino, 2005). Because they are innovative, youth-adult partnerships are frequently perceived to be “challenging, perhaps even threatening, because implementation requires a shift in traditional roles among adults and youth” (Zeldin, Camino et al., 2005, p. 123). The youth-adult partnership perspective emphasises the importance of
youth governance or youth decision-making. This often involves young people working in partnership with adults to “set the overall policy direction of organizations, institutions, and coalitions” (Zeldin et al., 2000, p. 3). Youth may also be involved in making administrative or operational decisions within this framework. The idea that adults can and should collaborate with youth over organisational and community decision-making runs counter to prevailing social norms and expectations regarding adult-youth relationships (Zeldin et al., 2008).

The youth-adult partnership literature is appealing within the current study context because it incorporates all adult relationships with young people and it considers the group, organisational or community context as well. However, a potential disadvantage is that youth-adult partnership frameworks clearly require a commitment to equitable power relationships and inclusive decision-making processes between adults and young people. If the organisation or community concerned does not view adults and youth as equal partners this renders the approach difficult to establish or implement.

**Implications for this Study**

This study is concerned with understanding a faith-based community context in which a youth mentoring programme is being considered as a strategy to help develop adult-youth relationships and youth participation in the community. The literature reviewed so far has established that a youth mentoring programme will not automatically result in fuller youth participation. Intergenerational programmes have shown potential utility in promoting attitude change (based on age) and supporting reciprocity between young people and older people, but they leave out the middle aged adult group, which is an
important part of the parish community. Youth-adult partnership programmes hold the most potential for fostering full youth participation and facilitating relationships with all adult age groups. However, a partnership programme may not be possible if adult community members are not prepared for collaborative and equitable decision-making with young people. Overall, a pre-programme context evaluation taking account of all three literatures as well as the realities and possibilities of the specific community concerned is required to establish what kind of adult-youth programme would be effective given this community and its goals.

Theory and the Current Study

Theory has an important influence on the way that research is framed, including what is studied (the focus) and the assumptions that are made. This in turn influences the kinds of understandings generated and the quality of the programmes developed within the area of adult-youth relationships. DuBois and Karcher (2005) comment on the cyclical relationship between theory, research and practice, where theory is seen as “facilitating more conceptually sophisticated and informative research” with research contributing “a rigorous, evidence-based orientation to ensure safe and effective practice through all stages of program development, evaluation, and dissemination” (DuBois & Karcher, p. 8). This section of the literature review explores the main models and theories that inform the three adult-youth programme literatures with a view to informing the initial stages of programme development within the parish.
context. A suitable theoretical framework to guide the analysis process of this study is also identified.

Theoretical Approaches used within the Combined Literature

Consideration of the combined literatures allows a representation of different ways of understanding adult-youth relationships to be developed. Theoretical approaches representative of the adult-youth relationship programme literatures are presented below and each considers adult-youth relational aspects, but in different ways, with different assumptions. I evaluate each theoretical perspective according to its potential application and utility given the scope and focus of the current study.

Adult to youth relationships that aim to benefit young people

Theory that informs traditional youth mentoring programmes mostly tends to focus on the benefits for the young person. For example, Jean Rhodes (2005) provides a model of youth mentoring designed to stimulate theoretical understandings and research about how mentoring works. Rhodes’ model postulates that mentoring relationships characterised by trust, empathy and mutuality are ideal, but that this is moderated by factors such as interpersonal history, social competencies, the duration of the mentoring relationship, programme practices and family and community context. Rhodes outlines that when effective mentoring bonds are formed they are likely to influence positive youth outcomes such as social and emotional development, cognitive development and identity development. Development in the social-emotional arena via a positive relationship with a mentor may serve to foster more positive
parental relationships and relationships with other adults and peers. Overall, combined development effects on the young person may result in positive outcomes such as better grades, emotional wellbeing and behaviour (Rhodes, 2005).

Figure 2. Model of Youth Mentoring
Reprinted with kind permission from Sage Publications and Dr Jean Rhodes: Handbook of youth mentoring, A model of youth mentoring, 2005, p. 32, Figure 3.1.

With regard to the current study, individual youth outcomes such as better grades and behaviour are not relevant given that: (a) the study youth would not be considered to be economically, socially or academically at-risk; and (b)
the parish focus is not on the development of individual young people. However, establishing effective mentoring relationships would meet the parish aim of developing adult-youth relationships.

Rhodes’ (2005) model includes community context and draws attention to the limited opportunities that at-risk young people may have to form close relationships with non-parental adults. It is a limitation that Rhodes’ discussion of community context is mainly restricted to: (a) at-risk young people; and (b) negative factors. Rhodes goes on to identify social changes such as busyness and less cohesive families and communities as influences on the lack of non-familial adults willing to get involved in the lives of young people. My argument is firstly that all young people (regardless of risk status) are affected by these factors to some extent. Secondly, a model of mentoring applicable to a small community context could include community factors that might limit or promote opportunities for developing effective adult-youth relationships (e.g. adult attitudes to young people, opportunities for youth engagement).

The focus adopted within this study includes identifying interventions that facilitate a supportive community context for the development of a formal programme and stronger adult-youth relationships.

**Bi-directional adult-youth relationships for reciprocal benefit**

Within the current study I assume that if benefits for both young people and adults are promoted and experienced within the relationship, it is more likely to become close and enduring.

Renee Spencer (2006) utilised *relational theory* within her study on the processes young people and their mentors engage in that result in close relationships. Relational theory identifies processes including authenticity,
empathy, mutuality, collaboration, pleasurable experiences, shared meanings and companionship in relationships as contributing to psychological wellbeing, presumably for both adults and young people (Spencer, 2006). Spencer concluded her study by highlighting “…the complex and bi-directional nature of this process” (2006, p. 309), emphasising the joint commitment and emotional involvement of both the young person and the adult.

Bi-directionality and reciprocity are relational processes that can also be explained by Erik Erikson’s lifespan developmental theory. Erik Erikson’s psychosocial theory has been utilized within the intergenerational field in particular (VanderVen, 2004), because it is able to account for the strong and bi-directional relationships that can develop between older people and younger people (Kessler & Staudinger, 2007). Attention to bi-directionality and ongoing reciprocity between older people and younger people stands in contrast to “traditional adult-child relationships, in particular, such as mentor-mentee, teacher-student, therapist-patient, and the like; traditionally these have been seen as unidirectional, flowing from the adult to the child as the receptacle or recipient” (VanderVen, 2004, p. 87).

Kessler and Staudinger (2007) utilise Erikson’s theory to explore “G1-G3” interactions (those between grandparent generations and grandchild generations) in relationships between non-family older people and youth. They conceptualised these interactions to be “a complex interplay between age-related motivational concerns on the one hand and contextual demands of the situation on the other” (Kessler & Stadinger, 2007, p. 690). Erikson’s theory identifies generativity as a motivational concern for older people and identity formation as a motivational concern for young people. Kessler and Staudinger argue,
“generativity and identity formation are complementary motivational concerns that together constitute the G1-G3 motivational pattern” (2007, p. 691).

Contextual demands can stimulate and support this interchange between young and old by encouraging older people to pass on their life experiences and by sparking curiosity and attentiveness in younger people, assigning an expert status to the older person in the process. Young people are more likely to be attentive and interested in older people when the context allows them to search for information about themselves and the world, allowing young people to experience closeness in the process. Contexts that trigger stereotypical views of older people (i.e. the deficiencies of old age) prevent the G1-G3 motivational pattern from occurring (Kessler & Staudinger, 2007).

Erikson’s lifespan developmental theory as applied by Kessler and Staudinger (2007) has potential for the current study because it helps to identify contextual factors that can help or hinder a bi-directional and mutually satisfying interaction between older people and young people. According to this perspective, a parish programme supportive of the motivational concerns of both older and younger people might be considered more likely to lead to closer relationships between these generations.

VanderVen (2004) calls for a revision of Erikson’s developmental theory given the longevity that characterises the human lifespan today and based on her argument that a number of intergenerational interactions are possible when we conceptualise a standard generation as consisting of around twenty years. Relationships between adolescents and middle aged adults would be considered to be part of the intergenerational framework given this definition. However, the motivational patterns identified within Erikson’s original theory are not nuanced
enough to explain or predict the full range of possible young person to adult motivational interactions available in the parish. If lifespan developmental theory were extended, it could be usefully applied in a multi-generational community situation such as this.

**Inter-group relationships for social change**

Within the intergenerational and youth-adult partnership literatures a common concern is changing the way that age defined groups are perceived and included in the community.

Theory concerned with changing limiting age-related attitudes or stereotypes has relevance to the current study given that limiting age-related attitudes are a potential obstacle to developing closer adult-youth relationships. Susan Fox and Howard Giles (1993) provide a comprehensive account of their *Intergenerational Contact Model* [ICM] as an inter-group approach.

Intergenerational contact programmes generally aim to bring together two generations in order to facilitate more positive attitudes towards older people, since age is a salient characteristic that leads to a perception of another generation as a distinct social group. “Contact theory specifies the conditions under which encounters between groups should lead to more positive images of each other (e.g., common goals, equal status)” (Fox & Giles, 1993, p. 433). The ICM model takes into account “the younger and older participants, the wider social factors, and the question of salience of the contact situation being either intergroup or interpersonal in nature” (Fox & Giles, p. 439). For example, regarding wider social factors, it is postulated that ‘equal status’ opportunities are more likely to result in positive behavioural and attitudinal changes (Hewstone &
Brown, 1986). In addition, intergroup encounters that emphasise age as a salient factor in the contact situation are more likely to lead to attitudinal change than interpersonal encounters that focus on the development of intimate relationships (Fox & Giles, 1993).

The ICM model takes into account the personality traits, goals and expectations of the participants as well as “augmenting factors” including time span, frequency of contact, power and territory. A unique characteristic of this model is that it considers “that different contexts and territories can produce different results” (Fox & Giles, 1993, p. 440). For example, if older people are perceived to be infirm or if older people feel that they are “invading the younger people’s territory” a negative attitude change can result for either younger or older people (Fox & Giles, p. 440). All of these factors affect the actual contact situation where participants judge the quality of their contact, make attributions, change or maintain attitudes, behaviours, interest or social distance. The ICM has great relevance to the study context and is useful for identifying both positive and negative factors that could influence the effectiveness of an adult-youth programme (the contact situation) designed to foster closer relationships between adults and young people. The focus of this study is not upon age-related attitudinal change, although it is possible that this will occur.
Figure 3. Intergenerational Contact Model
Reprinted with kind permission from Elsevier, Dr Susan Fox and Dr Howard Giles: Journal of Aging Studies, Accommodating intergenerational contact – a critique and theoretical model, 7(4), p. 440, Figure 2.

Empowerment theory considers power issues and the way that age-defined groups are included (or not included) in the community. Abigail Lawrence-Jacobson (2006) argues that empowerment theory is a useful framework for intergenerational community-building programmes (i.e., intergenerational youth-adult partnership) because it aims to correct powerlessness amongst young people and older people (both groups in society that lack access and control over valued resources). Empowerment can be studied as both process and outcome at the individual, organisational and
community levels (Lawrence-Jacobson, 2006) and the three levels of analysis are interdependent (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 46).

Table 1 reproduces Marc Zimmerman’s comparison of empowering processes and empowered outcomes across the three levels of analysis.

Table 1.

A Comparison of Empowering Processes and Empowered Outcomes Across Levels of Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF ANALYSIS</th>
<th>PROCESS (“EMPOWERING”)</th>
<th>OUTCOME (“EMPOWERED”)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual</strong></td>
<td>Learning decision-making skills</td>
<td>Sense of control</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Managing resources</td>
<td>Critical awareness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Working with others</td>
<td>Participatory behaviours</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational</strong></td>
<td>Opportunities to participate in decision-making</td>
<td>Effectively compete for resources</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shared responsibilities</td>
<td>Networking with other organizations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shared leadership</td>
<td>Policy influence</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community</strong></td>
<td>Access to resources</td>
<td>Organizational coalitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open government structure</td>
<td>Pluralistic leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tolerance for diversity</td>
<td>Residents’ participatory skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reprinted with kind permission from Springer Science+Business Media and Dr Marc Zimmerman: Handbook of community psychology, Empowerment theory: Psychological, organizational, and community levels of analysis, 2000, p. 47, Table 1.
When Zimmerman’s empowerment model is applied to the study context it becomes pertinent to consider whether the parish is empowering of young people individually and whether young people are empowered within the parish organisation, compared with adults.\footnote{The community level in Zimmerman’s table applies to inter-relationships between community organisations and agencies and is not relevant to this study.} If the programme implemented within the parish shapes adult-youth power relationships in particular ways this is likely to have an impact on the kinds of community participation that develop for young people compared with adults.

Roger Hart’s (1992) *Ladder of Participation* typology provides a means of assessing where young people stand in relation to adults in the area of project development. I consider that the levels that Hart delineates are also potentially useful in identifying where a particular programme, organisation or community is operating (or seeks to operate) on a scale ranging from forms of youth non-participation through forms of participation.

Hart outlines three non-participatory levels:

1. **Manipulation**. Children participate but have no understanding of the issues and do not understand their actions.

2. **Decoration**. Children are there to entertain or look good but they have little understanding of the purpose and no say in the organizing.

3. **Tokenism**. Children are given a voice but they have little choice about the subject or the style of communication and little opportunity to develop opinions.
Hart outlines that for a project to be considered participatory the following requirements should be met:

- The children understand the intentions of the project,
- They know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why,
- They have a meaningful (rather than ‘decorative’) role,
- They volunteer for the project after the project was made clear to them.

(Hart, 1992, p. 11)

The final four levels of participation on Hart’s ladder involve different kinds of adult-youth inter-group arrangements.
Hart refers to adult initiated projects involving shared decisions with children (Rung 6) as “true participation” (1992, p. 12). With regard to child initiated projects involving shared decisions with adults (Rung 7), Hart comments that “projects like these…are all too rare” and attributes this to “the absence of caring adults attuned to the particular interests of young people” (1992, p. 14).

Whether a particular expression of youth participation is appropriate will be determined in part by the nature of the project and the context. Hart explains that even in cultures where children’s participation in certain activities is not voluntary, they may still be fully informed and subscribe to the intentions of the project.

Summary of adult-youth relationship theories

Each of the models or theories presented highlights factors or influences that may impact on the development of adult-youth relationships. Each model or theory includes individual, interpersonal and inter-group aspects, but in different ways with different emphasis.

A community intention to develop closer adult-youth relationships and to increase youth involvement guides this study. My goal is to take account of the particular parish context and the range of factors that may influence its adult-youth relationships. This is likely to result in the development of a model that is particular to the parish but which incorporates some elements of the theories examined above.
Analytical Framework for the Current Study

The interpersonal characteristics of adult-youth relationships within the parish are a focus within this study. However, individual factors and inter-group or community factors are also likely to have an influence on the nature of adult-youth relationships in the parish. Consequently I have chosen to apply Barbara Rogoff’s sociocultural approach to data collected within this study. Barbara Rogoff’s work is situated within a sociocultural-historical approach, which considers that human development must be understood within its social and cultural-historical context. From Rogoff’s perspective, “human development is a process in which people transform through their ongoing participation in cultural activities, which in turn contribute to changes in their cultural communities across the generations” (Rogoff, 2003, p. 37). Rogoff’s focus is upon what people do together in sociocultural activities.

Rogoff attends to the personal, interpersonal and cultural-institutional dimensions of human activity and considers them to be different analytic planes, with no view existing separately from the others. Each plane informs the others and it is the observer’s or researcher’s view that changes according to what information is more important to them. Therefore, while one plane may be foregrounded, the others remain visible in the background, providing information that is useful to developing an understanding of what is occurring (Rogoff, 2003).

The personal or transformation-of-participation perspective focuses on the individual and information about him or her. Interpersonal and cultural-institutional information is available in the background to help to understand what the individual is doing. Participatory appropriation is a concept used by
Rogoff (1995) to refer to how individuals change through their involvement in an activity. Their involvement changes them and prepares them for future involvements, influencing their future responses.

The *interpersonal focus of analysis* focuses on what people are doing, what their different roles are and how they interact, whilst individual and cultural information is there in the background to help our interpretation. *Guided participation* is a concept used by Rogoff (1995) to refer to the “processes and systems of involvement between people as they communicate and coordinate efforts while participating in culturally valued activity” (Rogoff, 1995, p. 142). Guided participation is an interpersonal process whereby guidance refers to the direction offered by cultural and social values as well as by social partners and participation refers to both observation and actual involvement.

The *cultural-institutional focus of analysis* includes “The history of the activities and the transformations toward the future in which people and their communities engage” (Rogoff, 2003, p. 60). This view looks at the cultural practices that bring particular people together and for what purposes, how cultural practices are revised and how the community connects with broader cultural and historical practices in other settings. Rogoff argues that it is important to consider the contributions of the people involved in cultural activities in order to better understand cultural processes. Rogoff uses the metaphor of *apprenticeship* to refer to individuals participating in a cultural activity in such a way that less experienced participants develop more mature means of participation. The concept of apprenticeship allows a focus on the nature of the activity and its relation to practices and institutions of the community (Rogoff, 1995).
This study involves consideration of the involvement of groups of people (young people and adults) in a specific cultural and spiritual context (an Anglican parish). Although the parish is situated within its own unique context of locality, people and plant, it is also part of the institution of the Anglican Church. Rogoff asserts that institutions are “cultural habits” (Rogoff, 2003, p.85) in which current generations inherit the practices of previous generations as a matter of routine. Rogoff outlines that cultural habits are often accepted unquestioningly and their influence upon cultural practice is not generally acknowledged (Rogoff, 2003). These ideas are useful to this study because it involves consideration of possibly unquestioned patterns of relating between young people and adults in the context of an Anglican parish.

My focus within this study is on the interpersonal plane of parish adult-youth relationships, but following Rogoff’s approach I also include consideration of individual and cultural planes within the analysis.

The Benefits Associated with Effective Adult-Youth Programmes

Within this section of the literature review I consider contextual supports that have been identified as contributing to the effectiveness of adult-youth programmes. A summary of recommended organisational, pre-programme implementation and programme supports identified within the combined adult-youth programme literatures is presented. Individual, relationship and community benefits associated with effective adult-youth programmes are then summarised from the combined programme literatures. I develop the argument that adult behaviours and attitudes can have a pivotal influence upon the
development of effective adult-youth relationships. I also argue that assessing adult attitudes and behaviours concerning young people at the community and interpersonal levels is an important pre-programme design and implementation activity when programme goals include the development of adult-youth relationships.

This section of the review focuses on the adult end of adult-youth relationships to demonstrate that adult-devised structures and protocols and adult behaviours and attitudes can influence the effectiveness of adult-youth relationships and programmes. The adult focus is intended to balance the tendency of the youth mentoring literature and youth risk-resilience frameworks to mainly attend to individual youth factors that effect the development of adult-youth relationships. Although both adults and youths impact on the relationship formed, I have focused on adult structures and behaviours to illustrate that adults can take positive steps to engage with young people more effectively and to develop more effective adult-youth programmes.

**Supports for Effective Adult-Youth Relationships**

The combined programme literatures that inform this study include a number of references to organisational, pre-programme and programme supports that promote the development of effective adult-youth relationships. Table 2 includes empirical studies and reflections on field experience from the combined programme literatures.

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4 For the purposes of this section of the review, the term ‘effective adult-youth relationships’ is used to denote the building of mutually beneficial relationships between adults and young people.
Table 2. 
Organisational, Pre-Programme and Programme Activities that Support Effective Adult-Youth Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity or process</th>
<th>Researcher(s)/date</th>
<th>Programme literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ORGANISATIONAL ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmatively address issues of power</td>
<td>Zeldin, Camino et al., 2005</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create participation pathways for young people; institutionalise new organisational</td>
<td>Libby, Rosen &amp; Sedonaen, 2005; Zeldin, Camino et al., 2005; O’Donoghue &amp; Strobel, 2007</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>roles for youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop shared narratives with positive attributions</td>
<td>Zeldin, Camino et al., 2005</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a clear vision about young people; develop shared understandings about</td>
<td>Schulman, 2006; Zeldin, Camino et al., 2005</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>missions, visions and value statements; agree shared purposes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a culture of continual organisational and personal change (risk taking,</td>
<td>Schulman, 2006; O’Donoghue &amp; Strobel, 2007; Zeldin et al. 2005a</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idea-sharing and theories and stories of change)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PRE-PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduce mechanisms for the support and involvement of parents; develop supportive</td>
<td>DuBois, Holloway, Valentine &amp; Cooper, 2002; MacCallum &amp; Beltman, 2002</td>
<td>Youth mentoring programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community networks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilise and coordinate a group of diverse stakeholders</td>
<td>Zeldin, Camino et al., 2005</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity or process</td>
<td>Researcher(s)/date</td>
<td>Programme literature</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRE-PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES (continued)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide clear expectations of adults regarding their relationships with young people</td>
<td>Sanchez et al., 2007</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>O’Donoghue &amp; Strobel, 2007</td>
<td>Intergenerational programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide initial training for adults/young people; Mentors understand programme goals through orientation sessions</td>
<td>Ginwright, 2005; Libby et al., 2005; Mitra, 2005</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Morrow &amp; Styles, 1995</td>
<td>Youth mentoring programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide sufficient resources for the programme to achieve its aims</td>
<td>MacCallum &amp; Beltman, 2002</td>
<td>Youth mentoring programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfy local needs</td>
<td>Sanchez et al., 2007</td>
<td>Intergenerational programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor and evaluate overall programme implementation; include participant feedback</td>
<td>DuBois Holloway et al., 2002; MacCallum &amp; Beltman, 2002; Sanchez et al., 2007</td>
<td>Intergenerational programmes Youth mentoring programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Youth mentoring programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide a wide range of structured activities</td>
<td>DuBois, Holloway et al., 2002; MacCallum et al., 2006</td>
<td>Youth mentoring programmes Intergenerational programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide ongoing adult or youth support; ongoing training for mentors</td>
<td>Libby et al., 2005; Mitra, 2005</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DuBois, Holloway et al., 2002; Morrow &amp; Styles, 1995</td>
<td>Youth mentoring programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide adequate space, time, mentoring and feedback to adults around their relationships with young people</td>
<td>O’Donoghue &amp; Strobel, 2007</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continually adapt to the needs of the young people involved</td>
<td>MacCallum &amp; Beltman, 2002</td>
<td>Youth mentoring programmes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth-adult relationships are shaped by personal, social and community influences (Ginwright, 2005) and an understanding of how these contextual influences operate is required to implement effective youth-adult programmes in a community setting. The programme context or setting may incorporate some already established institutional or cultural practices that operate to enhance, block or impede programme effects. Within the literatures reviewed only the youth-adult partnership literature explicitly attends to community level activities such as stakeholder involvement, developing shared understandings and creating participation pathways for young people. “Unlike mentoring, where the relationship is one-on-one and often shaped by an adult role model, Y-APs [Youth-adult partnerships] encourage shared decision-making and shared power, and they embrace a collective spirit, which emphasizes group success” (Ginwright, 2005, p. 102).

My argument is that identifying key contextual influences can assist with making programme choices across the range of available programme types and with engaging in activities and processes likely to support programme implementation and effectiveness. This concurs with Zeldin and associates who state “Researchers need to articulate the path of associations between organisational context, types of youth-adult relationship, and types of outcomes” (Zeldin, Larson et al., 2005, p. 8). Age related contextual influences and factors are of particular interest in the current study and will be examined with a view to identifying associations between contextual influences, programmatic types and desired outcomes.
Positive Outcomes Associated with Effective Adult-Youth Relationships

The combined adult-youth relationship programme literatures reviewed as part of this study identify a number of benefits at the individual, relationship and community levels and these are summarised in Table 3, including the researcher(s) and programme literature from which the study originated.
### Programme Associated Benefits Relevant to this Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Researcher(s) / Date</th>
<th>Programme Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIVIDUAL BENEFITS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased competence / self-esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Young people develop improved social competence</td>
<td>DuBois, Holloway et al., 2002</td>
<td>Youth Mentoring Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people experience increased self-esteem</td>
<td>Sanchez et al., 2007</td>
<td>Intergenerational Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people develop specialised knowledge/skills</td>
<td>Larson et al., 2005; Zeldin, 2004; Sabo, 2003</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people develop increased self-confidence, interpersonal skills, a sense of responsibility</td>
<td>Larson et al., 2005</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults experience an enhanced sense of personal efficacy and belonging. Young people feel more valued and that they belong; Young people broaden their sense of identity and develop improved confidence; Young people experience enhanced community connections and networks</td>
<td>Zeldin, 2004</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increased motivation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older people develop more purpose and goals; Older people and young people are motivated to learn new things; Increased curiosity and discovery of new realities for both older people and young people</td>
<td>Sanchez et al., 2007</td>
<td>Intergenerational Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people get more involved in things that matter to them</td>
<td>Zeldin, 2004</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>Researcher(s) / Date</td>
<td>Programme Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIVIDUAL BENEFITS (continued)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Older people experience improved self-care and dignity; Older people experience improved perceived health</td>
<td>Sanchez et al., 2007</td>
<td>Intergenerational Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people experience improved emotional-psychological wellbeing</td>
<td>DuBois, Holloway et al., 2002</td>
<td>Youth Mentoring Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older people experience improved life-satisfaction</td>
<td>Meschel &amp; McGlynn, 2004</td>
<td>Intergenerational Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELATIONSHIP BENEFITS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing closeness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Older people experience reduced social isolation; Increased mutual assistance and exchange occurs across the generations</td>
<td>Sanchez et al., 2007</td>
<td>Intergenerational Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep and lasting relationships develop between young people and their mentors</td>
<td>Spencer, 2006</td>
<td>Youth Mentoring Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships with adults and other young people develop and mature</td>
<td>Rhodes, 2005; Sabo, 2003</td>
<td>Youth Mentoring Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth-Adult Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing respect and trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people feel listened to and respected</td>
<td>Zeldin, 2004</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual respect and trust between youth and between youth and adults is maintained</td>
<td>Messias et al., 2005</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people perceive trust and support from adults</td>
<td>O’Donoghue &amp; Strobel, 2007</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people experience a supportive environment in which they can grow</td>
<td>Sabo, 2003</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>Researcher(s) / Date</td>
<td>Programme Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNITY BENEFITS</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Changes in perceptions</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater access to youth perspectives</td>
<td>Libby et al., 2005</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combating ageism; Young people show more tolerance and respect for Older people</td>
<td>Sanchez et al., 2007</td>
<td>Intergenerational Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YP develop more positive attitudes toward older people</td>
<td>Kuehne, 2003a</td>
<td>Intergenerational Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessens the generational divide</td>
<td>Shulman, 2006</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults develop more positive perceptions of youth involvement</td>
<td>Jones &amp; Perkins, 2006</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults experience the competence of Young people</td>
<td>Zeldin, 2004</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Partnership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Increased youth involvement</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Young people experience increased ownership over programme directions</td>
<td>Larson et al., 2005</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people make efforts to improve their communities</td>
<td>O’Donoghue &amp; Strobel, 2007</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people remain involved for long periods</td>
<td>Libby et al., 2005; Sabo, 2003</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people develop the expertise to effect change in their communities</td>
<td>Jones &amp; Perkins, 2006; Sabo, 2003</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased opportunities for young people to be involved in decision-making</td>
<td>Kirshner et al., 2002</td>
<td>Youth-Adult Programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 indicates that programme type is associated with the level of outcomes that may be promoted or achieved. For example, community level outcomes in the area of changes in perceptions were identified within the intergenerational programme and youth-adult partnership literatures only. Community level outcomes in the area of increased youth involvement were solely identified within the youth-adult partnership literature. My argument is that decisions about programme type may have an impact on the kinds of outcomes that can be expected, including at what levels (individual, relationship, organisation or community).

Adult Attitudes and Challenges Related to Effective Youth-Adult Programmes

When adults hold negative perceptions or stereotypes of young people these can constrain young people and their interactions with adults (Jones & Perkins, 2006). Research studies conducted within the youth mentoring programme and youth-adult partnership fields identify some important attitudes and behaviours that adults demonstrate that allow closer and more productive relationships with young people to develop within adult-youth programmes. The same studies also indicate areas where adults have struggled or have had to work hard to address tensions between themselves and young people. The insights generated by these studies provide useful information about how adults, as members of programmes, organisations and communities, may engage with young people in ways that promote effective relationships.

5 Youth behaviours and attitudes can affect programme outcomes too, but because adults mostly commonly develop and implement adult-youth programmes they are the focus here.
This section of the review incorporates a wide range of studies with varying foci, aims and contexts. Table 4 provides important background information that identifies how each study was able to contribute information about the identification of supportive adult attitudes and behaviours and adult challenges. The studies included have been arranged in reverse chronological order.
Table 4.
An Outline of Studies that Identify Adult Attitudes and Behaviours that Promote Effective Relationships with Young People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDY DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>Researcher(s)/Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Developing youth activism amongst marginalized urban youth; Adult contributions to the development of youth activism;</td>
<td>O’Donoghue &amp; Strobel (2007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community site</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Qualitative and quantitative data gathered over a 2 year period; Surveys, interviews, observations; Youth experiences in the organisation, including their relationships with adults; Youth self-rating on a variety of developmental categories</td>
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<tr>
<td>• An economically and ethnically diverse Community Based Youth Organisation [CBYO]; 112 youth aged 14-18; 40 staff members</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The processes that underpin successful mentoring relationships; Relational processes that occurred early in the relationship and that developed with time;</td>
<td>Spencer (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community based</td>
<td>Youth mentoring programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• In-depth semi-structured interviews; Youth and their mentors were interviewed together and separately; The interviews lasted between 1 ½ and 2 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Typical participants in the Big Brother Big Sister programme; 24 youth and adult pairs who had been in a mentoring relationship for between 1 and 11 years; Youth aged 12-17 years and adults aged 25-55 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Day-to challenges to the adults; Techniques that adults used to keep youth work in the programme on track while keeping youth invested;</td>
<td>Larson, Walker &amp; Pearce (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School and community sites</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Case study method; Data obtained at multiple points in time from multiple perspectives (3-4 month period); Qualitative interviews, participant observations; Both adults and youth included</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Youth programmes that varied in the degree of youth and adult influence over programme activities; 4 high quality programmes for high-school aged youth; 10-13 youth and 1-2 adults from each programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Description</td>
<td>Researcher(s)/Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>The perspectives and experiences of adults actively engaged with youth empowerment programmes; What caring adult involvement means in relation to the processes and outcomes of youth empowerment</td>
<td>Messias, Fore, McLoughlin &amp; Parra-Medina (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community sites</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth interviews, field observations and interactive group discussions with adult programme leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth empowerment programmes targeting health promotion and risk reduction around tobacco use; 4 youth empowerment programmes; 20 adult leaders participated in the research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How adults can foster youth participation and leadership in school reform efforts; Support for advisors (adult leaders); Distributed leadership and student voice development</td>
<td>Mitra (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School site</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative data gathered over a 3 year period; Semi-structured interviews, observations of meetings and conversations, written documents from both groups; All regularly participating students and adults were interviewed 2-3 times as well as others not directly involved in the groups</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A high-school with a good reputation for promoting student involvement; Two groups engaged in student-voice activities in the school; 43 students, 1 teacher, 1 community member</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban environments and pressures on Y-APs; Adult Development; Organisational practices</td>
<td>Ginwright (2005)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community sites</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflections, observations and experiences as Executive Director of Leadership Excellence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban programmes; Youth-adult partnerships; African-American youth and adults involved in Y-APs</td>
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<td>STUDY DESCRIPTION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pitfalls encountered by adults in Y-APs; Promising organisational practices</td>
<td>Camino (2005)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community sites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflections based on 18 years of researching and designing youth-serving programmes, including Y-APs; adult perspectives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults and organisations involved with Y-APs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth perceived support, structure and activity with their mentor; Youth reported benefits from the relationship with their mentor</td>
<td>Langhout, Rhodes &amp; Osborne (2004)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community based</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualitative and quantitative; Telephone interviews 18 months apart; Youth accounts of their relationships with their mentors; Measures of youth social, psychological, academic and behavioural functioning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilised data gathered in a national evaluation of Big Brothers Big Sisters; 1138 youth aged 10-16; 90% of youth lived with 1 parent and another 5% lived with a grandparent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environments that youth perform evaluation activities in that promote their development</td>
<td>Sabo (2003)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community sites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case studies; Interviews with 50 youth participants and observations of youth during evaluation activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 youth-run or -led evaluation projects in North America; Formerly homeless women aged 15-21; youth aged 9-21 years; youth aged 17-21 years; young ex-offenders aged 15-21 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentoring relationships and how they change over time</td>
<td>Morrow &amp; Styles (1995)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community based</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualitative; Semi-structured in-depth interviews at two times (nine months apart); Adults and youth interviewed separately; Case files, observations of training sessions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Brothers Big Sisters of America; Adult volunteers aged 21-57; Young people aged 10-15; n=82 relationships</td>
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</table>
Camino states that, “Adults have been beset with the questions of what it means to partner with youth, ages 12 to 21, in institutional, cultural and societal contexts that generally are predicated on asymmetrical relationships between adults and youth” (Camino, 2005, p. 76). The research reviewed in this section either concerns relationships and programmes that were considered to be excellent, successful or effective, or it sought to identify characteristics of effective adult-youth relationships. Therefore, the research reviewed does not represent adult-youth programmes or relationships that struggled or were not successful. For example, Rhodes (2002) estimates that over half of all mentoring relationships fail in the first few months.

The following discussion about adult attitudes and behaviours that support effective adult-youth programmes is organised according to the headings outlined in Figure 5. The headings chosen represent key themes that emerged from my reading of the literature and many of them are interrelated.
Caring about young people

Being willing to extend oneself for young people

Monitoring oneself (as well as young people)

Seeing oneself as a co-learner and collaborator with young people

Expecting young people to extend themselves and providing support

Focusing on developing relationships (rather than improving youth)

Listening to young people

Being willing to share in authentic ways (especially personal stories)

Being willing to provide honest feedback

Creating a youth-centred environment

Providing moderate levels of structure and activity

Creating space for young people to act

Ensuring that young people have fun

Figure 5. Adult attitudes and behaviours that support effective adult-youth programmes

Caring about young people

Researchers studying adult contributions to effective youth-adult relationships have identified a range of caring attitudes and behaviours that enable young people to participate more fully in programme and community activities. Mitra (2005) found that effective adult leaders were passionate about young people and were committed to improving outcomes for youth. O’Donoghue and Strobel (2007) surveyed, observed and interviewed both youth and adults involved in a community based youth organisation over a two-year
period. They found that adults in the organisation cared about what was happening for young people, were willing to provide support, and were intentional about supporting youth growth. This enabled young people in the programme to undertake an impressive array of activities including facilitating statewide, national and international workshops around youth development and educational change.

Being willing to extend oneself for young people

Supportive adults were willing to extend themselves, including making efforts to be available outside of business hours and putting their work aside to find out what was happening in a young person’s life (O’Donoghue & Strobel, 2007). For example, Mitra (2005) researched two high-school based programmes aiming to increase youth voice (influence) over a three-year period. Mitra found that the adult advisor of one group was willing to “buffer” young people from other adults who were potential critics (p. 544). The advisor dealt with adult concerns directly and assisted young people to prevent conflict by encouraging regular communication between themselves and adults not directly involved in the programme. This contributed to the project’s success within a school environment characterised by hierarchical adult-youth relationships.

Monitoring oneself (as well as young people)

When the adult-youth relationship strives toward egalitarianism, O’Donoghue and Strobel argue that youth and adult roles are “continually renegotiated” (2007, p. 478). Youth skills, knowledge and experience continually increase and in response, adults need to monitor their own roles to
enable young people to increase their responsibility and participation accordingly. One of the youth leaders in this study chose to ask other adults for feedback and critique on her work (in the same way that young people were expected to amongst themselves) and found that this action “spurred her and her young people to a higher level of performance” (O’Donoghue & Strobel, 2007, p. 480). According to O’Donoghue and Strobel, adults need to be willing to change with and be affected by young people, including changing because of youth feedback.

**Seeing oneself as a co-learner and collaborator with young people**

Camino (2005) reflected upon her 18 years experience researching and designing youth serving programmes and recommended that adults see themselves as co-learners with young people. Camino cautioned against adults restricting their responses to young people by assuming that young people mainly offer creativity, energy and vitality and themselves experience and wisdom. Camino pointed out that adults are able to offer creativity and energy to their partnerships with young people and that young people have often had experiences that they can bring to their partnerships with adults. Adult development is also important within youth-adult partnerships (Camino, 2005; Ginwright, 2005).

Although young people and adults do not always perform the same roles, they do need to work collaboratively. For young people this may involve being treated like adults, being treated as intelligent people with valuable things to say and working “hand in hand” with adults (O’Donoghue & Strobel, 2007, p. 476).
Expecting young people to extend themselves and providing support

Adults involved in effective relationships with young people often expected young people to extend themselves and they provided scaffolding or intermediate supports to enable this. Messias et al., (2005) studied a range of youth empowerment organisations that supported young people to take on health promotion and risk reduction roles with their peers. This study focused on the perspectives of adult leaders who reported consistently pushing youth just beyond their comfort zones toward personal growth and learning. High expectations included: requiring young people to taking responsibility for their actions and programme activities; developing and using their leadership skills; being advocates; and standing up for what they believe in. Adults involved in youth empowerment programmes reported asking young people to be critical and reflective about their programme activities (Messias et al, 2005).

The amount of support and guidance that adults offer to young people needs to be responsive to their abilities and respectful of their need for appropriate amounts of autonomy. Larson, Walker and Pearce (2005) studied four high quality youth programmes that varied in the degree of adult or youth influence over programme activities. In youth-driven programmes aiming to develop youth leadership or planning skills, adults needed to be able to provide intermittent redirection and support without taking over to effectively support youth leadership development. Scaffolding is a concept used by Mitra (2005) to describe an adult pushing young people beyond their current frames of thinking while helping them to progress. An adult advisor in this study assisted young people to move forward by asking questions such as “What action are you going to take?” rather than setting up the process for them (Mitra, p. 534). The advisor
also modelled adult roles and competencies, allowing young people to assume more responsibility for tasks, as they were ready. Sabo (2003) observed that adults in youth-run or -led programmes encouraged and supported young people to assume a variety of roles and responsibilities, treating them as competent leaders. Adult leaders “relate to youth as who they are becoming, that is, a head taller” (Sabo, 2003, p. 19).

**Focusing on developing relationships (rather than improving youth)**

Focusing on developing a good relationship with young people rather than on changing them or fixing problems leads to more satisfying connections between young people and adults. Morrow and Styles found that a mentor focus on developing a reliable and trusting relationship led to more mentee-reported relationship satisfaction than focusing on achieving change in their mentee (Morrow & Styles, 1995). Spencer (2006) found that mentors who focused on promoting the positive development of their mentees (rather than fixing problems) were more satisfied with the relationship, as were their mentees.

Adults who had reported effective relationships with young people tended to be responsive to their individual needs (Morrow & Styles, 1995; Spencer, 2006), including taking their circumstances into account (Langhout et al., 2004). Spencer (2006) found that empathetic mentors took the complex challenges facing young people into account while promoting their positive development.

**Listening to young people**

Adult responsiveness includes listening to young people. Morrow and Styles (1995) identified this skill in mentors who consulted young people about
their preferences about joint activities. In Mitra’s (2005) study, an adult advisor always left empty agenda spots at meetings so that young people could fill them when desired. Larson (2005) identified the technique of listening to and obtaining feedback from youth as an important means of keeping young people engaged in adult-driven youth programmes.

Adults can use multiple strategies to encourage young people to speak up including small group work, large group discussions, creative art projects and individual writing (O’Donoghue & Strobel, 2007). Mitra (2005) also found that smaller planning meetings allowed some young people to get involved in key planning decisions, whereas they were very quiet in a larger group. In a different vein, Messias and colleagues (2005) identified adults’ being willing to listen to young people without offering suggestions as an appropriate response at times.

**Being willing to share in authentic ways (especially personal stories)**

A young person in Spencer’s study reported that his mentor’s ability to “be real” (authentic) was an important precursor to his allowing himself to grow closer to his mentor (Spencer, 2006, p. 298). Mentors in long-term relationships with their mentees reported sharing more of themselves and being willing to be appropriately vulnerable (Spencer, 2006). O’Donoghue and Strobel (2007) found that caring adults in a community based youth organisation were willing to share about themselves including family histories, personal feelings and worries, the influence of young people on their lives and their own “failures” (p. 477). Being honest, open and available were positive adult behaviours identified in other studies also (Messias et al., 2005; Mitra, 2005). Larson and colleagues (2005) identified acts of humility as a key adult behaviour promoting effective
relationships with young people in adult-driven youth programmes. This included willingness on the part of adults to be very human, to laugh, to cry and to express frustration in front of young people (Larson et al., 2005). Ginwright (2005) described crossing professional boundaries by sharing about personal stressors with young people and receiving their support and encouragement in reply. Ginwright concluded, “Being intentional about how we deal with stress will make us stronger partners in intergenerational efforts” (Ginwright, 2005, p. 107).

**Being Willing to Provide Honest Feedback**

Adults who were able to strike a good balance between challenge and support were willing to provide honest feedback to young people. Young people were found to appreciate honest feedback from adults and appeared to value it as a sign of adult authenticity as well as being a means of gauging their progress in relation to adults (O’Donoghue & Strobel, 2007; Mitra, 2005).

**Creating a youth-centred environment**

In the studies reviewed, adults were able to express caring for young people by creating a youth-centred environment and putting the needs of young people first within their programmes. Adults aiming to develop specific youth talents were able to pass on their knowledge by creating student-centred and experiential learning activities (Larson et al., 2005). O’Donoghue and Strobel (2007) found that adults in the programme that they studied often focused on providing a youth-centred environment where young people were encouraged to “make everything they want” (p. 477). This approach included following the
interests and requirements of young people. Messias and colleagues (2005) found that adults included in their study put young people first. This included valuing and respecting youth potential, acknowledging and recognising youth accomplishments and contributions and making a “commitment to youth participation, ownership and success in the programs” (Messias et al., 2005, p. 324).

Providing moderate levels of structure and activity

Young people appear to respond well to moderate levels of structure and activity in their relationships with adults. Langhout and colleagues (2004) utilised BBBS data generated by Grossman and Tierney (1998) to compare youth ratings of their social, academic and behavioural functioning with their perceptions of their relationship with their mentor. Young people experiencing moderate levels of structure and activity reported the largest number of benefits including increased feelings of self-worth and decreased feelings of inequality and conflict with their peers. Surprisingly, young people in this group tended to rate their mentors somewhat lower on the support dimension, which involved their reporting less satisfaction, less unconditional support and more negative affect that young people in other groups. Langhout and colleagues commented that, “higher levels of negative affect and conditional support in the mentoring relationship may not be necessarily problematic, as it may imply open and honest communication around important issues” (2004, p. 303). These authors went on to comment that conflict between the need for autonomy and the need for closeness is typical within close intergenerational relationships.
Creating space for young people to act

Messias and colleagues (2005) pointed out that adults can provide a range of opportunities for young people to try out new skills, learn, and make mistakes in a safe environment. Adults who have effective relationships with young people seek to allow young people sufficient autonomy, since too much adult control can be a threat to youth ownership (Larson et al., 2005). In Mitra’s (2005) study adult advisors worked to ensure that young people developed collaborative skills, a common language for group activities and a culture of partnership in order to create the space necessary to build group solidarity and enact change. Sabo (2003) observed that adults supported young people to perform new roles by teaching them evaluation terms. This allowed young people to communicate about their work in a range of settings, with diverse audiences. In addition, some young people were paid for their work, which they interpreted as being taken seriously by adults and being viewed as smart and competent.

Ensuring that young people have fun

Adults who were able to keep young people engaged while leading programme activities were also able to balance challenge with fun (Larson et al., 2005). Morrow and Styles found that adult mentors who valued fun for its own sake, rather than as being good for the young person, or a reward for good behaviour, were engaged in mentoring relationships that were perceived to be more satisfying by their mentees. Sipe (2002) identifies that fun is a key aspect of relationship building.
**Adult Challenges**

Research studies conducted within the youth mentoring programme and youth-adult partnerships fields identify some areas where adults have struggled or have had to work hard to address tensions between themselves and young people. Adult challenges have been presented under five main headings that serve to capture the main themes that I identified within the literature: adult involvement, youth monitoring, accountability, power and closeness. Some crossover is apparent between the different themes, but each heading captures a different aspect of the identified challenges.

**Adult involvement**

A theme that emerged within a number of the studies reviewed was adult involvement. Some studies identified that too much adult involvement was difficult for young people whereas others commented that too little adult involvement had detrimental effects on youth achievement.

Larson and colleagues (2005) observed that too little adult input could lead to youth control breaking down and projects getting off-track with associated declines in youth motivation and ownership. Camino (2005) commented that in her experience, some adults made the mistake of thinking that youth empowerment involved letting youth do everything of importance. This approach failed to take account of youth skills and whether young people had the time to be that involved. Camino asserted that young people like to share tasks and responsibilities with adults and benefit from adult participation.
When adults became too authoritarian and told youth what to do, youth reported feeling “less free” (Larson et al., 2005, p. 478). When the leaders in the programme reported by O’Donoghue and Strobel (2007) moved into young peoples’ sphere of responsibility by choosing projects for them, the young people rebelled and refused to work on those projects. Adult leaders found that youth choice and voice was very important to keeping them motivated and engaged.

Sometimes when adults were encouraging of young people assuming responsibility and involvement, young people reported feeling fearful or reluctant. Young people reported struggling with conventional patterns of youth-adult relating as well as finding it hard to break out of hierarchical relationship patterns with adults (O’Donoghue & Strobel, 2007). Adults need to be aware of youth vulnerabilities too.

**Youth monitoring**

Monitoring the activities of young people emerged as an important adult activity that promoted the success of youth-adult partnerships. The adults involved in assisting young people were found to need supports also.

The ongoing need to monitor young people was represented by one youth leader as involving a mixture of “leading”, “pushing”, “dragging” and “stepping back” (Messias et al., 2005, p. 331). Larson and colleagues observed that adult willingness to fill in when youth did not complete tasks led to one adult leader being “stretched thin” (Larson et al., 2005, p. 67). Messias and colleagues noted that adults fulfil a range of invisible roles in their support of youth empowerment and that allowing young people to be in the forefront was part of maintaining a youth-centred approach. Camino (2005) advised that adult developmental needs
must be addressed within youth-adult partnerships, lest they face “insidious challenges” (p. 79). The need for adult leaders to be empowered so that they could in-turn empower youth was noted in Mitra’s (2005) study also, where support for the adult advisor was observed to be critical to the success of a project.

**Accountability**

Concerns about adult or youth accountability were apparent in three of the studies reviewed within this section. A teacher/youth advisor in Mitra’s (2005) study reported difficulties working with a group of young people who came to function as student *organisers*. The teacher struggled between letting the student organisers make mistakes and preventing errors that might make them look unprofessional to other teachers. The students struggled with their teacher’s assistance at times, feeling that she needed to learn to “let go” (Mitra, 2005, p. 536) and let them learn by their mistakes. The teacher/advisor reported experiencing ongoing challenges about how to advise her group constructively.

Adult leaders in the study conducted by Messias and colleagues (2005) reported experiencing the risk that students would make mistakes or even fail as a significant challenge. However, they also recognised the value of allowing young people to learn from their mistakes. Leaders in this study reported holding youth accountable for their successes as well as their failures, but finding this a challenging process at times, even scary.

In a different vein, O’Donoghue and Strobel observed that problems occurred for adult leaders when their work-related accountability requirements interfered with their having sufficient time for relationship building with young
people. This especially occurred when success was measured according to tasks completed rather than whether or not young people were engaged or learning. It was noted that this negatively affected egalitarianism between youth and adults since “As adults became more concerned with the job, they had less time and flexibility to create opportunities for youth voice and participation (O’Donoghue & Strobel, 2007, p. 480).

Power

A number of researchers commented on adult power and control and its effects on youth engagement. Camino pointed out that in her experience, the level of adult-youth collaboration was largely determined “by how willing and able adults were to open up space for youth” (Camino, 2005, p. 479). Messias and colleagues (2005) observed that even when a lot of collaboration occurred between youth and adults, it was most often the adults who had the final say. Young people included in O’Donoghue and Strobel’s (2007) study reported being very aware that their ideas would only be utilised if leaders liked them.

Colley (2001) discussed the issue of adults (within particular institutions or organisations) using mentoring as a way of socialising young people to conform better. Colley distinguished between these approaches and mentor rich environments where young people have access to a range of supportive adults, but on their own terms. Larson and colleagues (2005) observed that adult control, constraints and rules could undermine youth ownership and engagement if they were overly evident. Messias and colleagues (2005) gave an example of an adult leader asking a young person to give them their seat at the head of the table during a meeting where adults were generally directive, telling young
people what to do. They observed that youth engagement and participation in the meeting visibly declined.

On the other hand, Camino (2005) observed that adults often confused giving up organisational power with giving up personal power, thinking that they had to get out of the way to be effective. Camino argued that a personal power that reflected wisdom and experience was appropriate and that adults needed to be willing to share this to enhance youth learning. According to Camino, adults need to recognise the contribution that they make to overall group effectiveness (Camino, 2005).

Closeness

Spencer’s study (2006) highlighted some of the emotional challenges that adults face in their relationships with young people. Spencer noted that some adults had to make a concerted effort to be emotional and vulnerable with their mentees, particularly those from professional backgrounds. An adult in the same study experienced difficulty getting close to his protégé who was reserved and did not tend to share personal information. Despite being in a relationship for four years this mentoring relationship failed to deepen. Adults who put a lot of effort into their relationships with young people may experience significant disappointment if the relationship fails to thrive.

Conclusion to the Section

Overall, the programme context and the adults that young people come into contact with have a significant influence on the way that youth-adult
relationships develop. Referring to the choice between an adult-driven versus a youth-driven approach, Larson and colleagues (2005) state that,

Different frameworks for youth-adult relationships may be suited for different situations… Rather than picking a preferred approach, we think it important to understand the distinct dynamics associated with the two approaches and evaluate what approach, or meld, is suited to given objectives and contexts. (Larson et al., p. 70)

From the evidence reviewed, their advice applies to any programme that aims to develop youth-adult relationships.

Study Purposes and the Research Questions

**Study Purposes**

In light of the literature reviewed, the purposes of this study are to: (a) explore the interpersonal and cultural-institutional context of the parish prior to the design and implementation of a formal adult-youth programme; (b) consult both young people and adults about their perceptions, expectations and experiences concerning youth mentoring and youth participation in the parish; and (c) assess whether a youth mentoring programme is the most appropriate adult-youth programme to implement in the parish given its context.

**The Research Questions**

In relation to the study purposes, the following questions will be addressed:

1. What are the current perceptions, expectations and experiences of parish members regarding youth mentoring and youth participation?
2. What are the areas of commonality and difference among the perceptions, expectations and experiences of young people (16-25), middle aged people (26-65) and older people (66+) in the study context?

3. What is the potential of mentoring as an intervention for developing adult-youth relationships and youth participation in this parish?
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes an outline of the paradigmatic and research approaches that inform the methodology of this research. The paradigm of constructivism and the research approaches of action-oriented research and illuminative evaluation are important features (or influences) that have shaped the methodology of this study.

Figure 6 illustrates how these features interact and intersect. The figure may be viewed as one large spotlight (constructivism) incorporating two smaller and intersecting spotlights (action research and illuminative evaluation) that illuminate the parish (study) context. The information generated by this integrated approach assists with programme design, programme implementation and programme evaluation.

The three methodological features and their particular contributions to this study will be discussed and explained further in the three sections that follow. The fourth section discusses the importance of a focus on context for ensuring successful programme design, implementation and evaluation.
Figure 6. Paradigmatic and methodological lenses that influence this research.
This research study is situated within a constructivist paradigm. Researchers working from this framework concern themselves with how people view objects and events and the meanings that they attribute to them (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). Researchers within this paradigm accept that individuals may see things differently or reach varying conclusions about the same event or object. Reality is seen as socially constructed and the researcher’s job is to seek to understand the multiple social constructions that people make about the world around them (Mertens, 2005). Both the researcher and the researched are positioned culturally, historically and theoretically and therefore there is no such thing as ‘neutrality’ or an ‘objective’ view of reality (Freedman, deMarrais, Preissle, Roulston & St. Pierre et al., 2007). Constructivist researchers have to become adept at not allowing their own cultural assumptions to get in the way of seeing and understanding those of others (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Culture is an important area of investigation for some constructivist researchers and it is of interest in the current study. Culture occurs when groups of people develop common expectations and meanings about what they see (objects) and what happens to them (events) and these are passed from one generation of members to the next. Constructivists “…often pay attention to the shared meanings held by those in a cultural arena—a setting in which people have in common matters such as religion, history, work tasks, confinement in prison, or political interests” (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 28).

Constructivists set out to discover these shared meanings, recognising that whilst an individual’s interpretations may be somewhat distinct, they are
also likely to include shared understandings from the cultural arena. Constructivist researchers learn about culture indirectly, by deducing the underlying rules or definitions (cultural assumptions) that people make whilst they discuss ordinary events or objects. Within this study, as parish members talk about youth mentoring and youth participation, cultural assumptions about adult-youth relationships and youth participation in the parish may become apparent.

The current study is conducted within the cultural arena of an Anglican parish where I explore parish member’s perceptions, beliefs and expectations regarding youth mentoring and youth participation. It is important to acknowledge that within this work I act as a filter and make sense of the data collected given my relationship to the parish, my own cultural location and the literature chosen to frame this study. Lincoln advises that acknowledging one’s standpoint epistemology as a researcher develops authenticity because it facilitates honesty about one’s own position in relation to the study (Lincoln, 1995). My relationship with the parish as both an insider and outsider is discussed in the next sub-sections as part of establishing the authenticity of this research.

**Researcher Positionality – Relationship**

Patton (2002) outlines the kinds of information that are required within a research report to establish the credibility of the researcher, particularly “…any personal and professional information that may have affected data collection, analysis and interpretation” (Patton, 2002 p. 566). Personal information of most
import for this study was my access to the study site (parish) as a member and my personal connection to the parish members who participated in this study.

At the time of conducting this research I had been a parish member for six years. My parish insider status had some advantages to offer toward successfully conducting this research because I had good background knowledge of the parish and had a positive personal relationship with many parishioners and parish staff. Access to the life of the parish was easy for me, but this could also serve to make it difficult for me to see the cultural assumptions that I shared with some of the research participants. Familiarity and an ongoing parish relationship might also have affected people’s willingness to be open with me about what they really thought (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

A combination of factors assisted me with becoming aware of my own cultural assumptions regarding the parish. Firstly, my extensive reading of the research literature related to this study provided me with alternative examples of adult-youth relationships and youth participation in other small community contexts. Secondly, my involvement in the parish had ceased when the data from this study were analysed, allowing me to investigate the research findings without the potential influence of an ongoing involvement in parish relationships, concerns or events. Finally, the integrated methodological approach employed in this study encouraged me to pay attention to both commonalities and differences regarding the multiple perspectives that I gained access to and this served to illuminate aspects of parish custom or tradition that I may have taken for granted otherwise.

The multiple methods employed within this study allowed participants choice about ways to express their views, and thus opportunities to express their
true opinions without threatening their relationship with me. The survey provided for written anonymous feedback that may have served to reassure respondents that did not want me to be able to identify them personally. The interviews provided for a private one-on-one interaction with me whilst the focus groups allowed for a small group discussion with other parish members and my participation was less prominent.

Researcher Positionality – Information Sharing

Within their criteria for promoting the rigor of new-paradigm (qualitative) inquiry, Lincoln and Guba (1985; cited in Lincoln, 1995) include “the commitment of inquiry to fairness (balance of stakeholder views)…[and] the open and democratic sharing of knowledge” (Lincoln, 1998, p. 277). One of the strengths of this study is that I was not ‘employed’ by the parish to conduct this research and I presented myself as someone conducting research for the parish as a whole. I sought overall permission from the parish for this research study to be undertaken by presenting the research study to parish council and receiving their endorsement for the project activities. I also formally presented the main purposes of my research and the data collection activities at all three parish Sunday services and asked parish members for their approval.

During the research study I regularly reported about its progress through church services and at forums such as the annual meeting of parishioners. The action research approach adopted within the study (and discussed in the next section) led me to seek ways of involving as many parish members as possible in the study and consequently the views and perspectives of all parish members were invited. The information gathered and the knowledge generated by this
study will be shared with the parish through a presentation and discussion and through dissemination of a synopsis of this study to parish members (past and present).

Researcher Positionality – Voice

Information sharing with the parish took into account my personal relationship with many parish members and their diverse backgrounds. I took care to avoid the use of technical jargon that might have excluded parish members and I also avoided using an authoritative manner of speaking or behaviour that might have distanced me from them.

The way that this research report is written is a related issue and it is my intention to make it clear when I am reporting the work or opinions of others and when I am expressing my own contribution, observations or interpretations. Use of first-person terms such as “I” will serve to alert the reader to the expression of my own voice. According to Patton (2002), use of the personal voice in qualitative research also serves to acknowledge relationship and to foster dialogue.

Action-Oriented Research

Action research is a member of the ‘action-oriented paradigm’ (Lincoln, 1998) and its approach to research has significantly contributed to the consultative and community focused commitments of this study. Action research is an approach that values consultation, and involves clients in identifying their “practical concerns in an immediate problematic situation…” (Rutman,
Hubberstey, Barlow & Brown, 2005, pp. 154-155). Action research also emphasises the sharing of skills between researcher and research participants so that participants can increasingly own and control the project as much as possible (Morsillo & Prilleltensky, 2007). In addition, Lincoln indicates that one of the four indicators of quality within the action-oriented paradigm is ‘voice’ – “…when community involvement is deep and wide many voices are heard” (1998, p. 21).

Preparation for this study (with particular regard to the development and administration of information-gathering methods) was undertaken in consultation with a parish-selected steering committee. Setting up a steering committee or advisory council consisting of members from each stakeholder group has the potential to provide guidance throughout the intervention development process (DuBois et al., 2006).

The research methods were selected and developed with the aim of involving as many parish members as possible. At all stages of its development this research project actively sought ways of including the experiences, beliefs and preferences of parish members so that these might meaningfully shape the proposed parish-based mentoring programme. Multiple data-collection methods were chosen to give research participants choices about how they shared their thoughts, experiences and opinions.

An action research project always involves a strategic intervention that aims to bring about change (Grundy, 1982). This study furthers the parish-identified aims to improve the quality of its adult-youth relationships and to increase the participation of young people. In doing so it addresses the criteria of quality within the action-oriented paradigm relating to its usefulness to the
community concerned and its contribution to community building (Lincoln, 1998). However, in order to be identified as action research the following requirements must also be met.

The project proceeds through a spiral of cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting, with each of these activities being systematically and self-critically implemented and interrelated; and

The project involves those responsible for the practice in each of the moments of the activity, widening participation in the project gradually to include others affected by the practice and maintaining collaborative control of the process.

(Grundy & Kemmis, 1981b; cited in Grundy, 1982, p. 23)

The original intent of this research was to meet these criteria by encouraging interested parish members to increasingly engage with discussing, planning and implementing the unfolding mentoring project in active and reflective ways. This did not eventuate in practice however, since those who became involved in the study showed reluctance to assume responsibility or take action upon shared project decisions. My interpretation is that this tendency was in keeping with the parish culture, which relies upon a hierarchical and authoritarian style of leadership.

Overall, whilst this study would not be identified as action research, the action research approach has significantly shaped the commitments of this study to consultation and community building. These action research foci work well alongside the constructivist paradigm due to their focus on accessing the socially constructed realities of participants and the assumption that reality can be reconstructed and altered via a process of inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 2001).
Illuminative Evaluation

Illuminative evaluation is an approach compatible with this study because it facilitates a close-up exploration of a programme’s context (Hamilton, 2005; Parlett & Hamilton, 1972) including social and cultural variables. Whereas this study does not evaluate an implemented programme, it does explore and evaluate a cultural context (as defined in an earlier section - constructivism), prior to programme implementation.

A main assumption within the illuminative evaluation methodology is that the innovation or programme will assume a different form in every situation given the idiosyncrasies of the particular programme context. There is an ‘instructional system’ consisting of formalized plans and statements (an idealized specification of the scheme) and what Parlett and Hamilton (1972) refer to as ‘the learning milieu’ including “…a network or nexus of cultural, social, institutional and psychological variables” that “…interact in complicated ways to produce…a unique pattern of circumstances, pressures, customs, opinions…” (p. 11). Parlett and Hamilton (1972) argue that the introduction of an educational innovation sets off reactions and ‘unintended consequences’ within the learning milieu and that these in turn will affect the innovation itself, in both the form that it takes and the effects that it has (p. 12). This study explores a particular programme context prior to programme implementation in order to help avoid ‘unintended consequences’, particularly those that would interfere with a mentoring programme’s ability to develop more meaningful relationships between adults and young people. I considered this important given that young
people occupy a particularly tentative position in Anglican parish life and inappropriate or ineffective programme implementation needs to be avoided.

The current study includes the action-oriented aim to seek opinions and perspectives from a wide range of study participants. The task of the illuminative evaluation approach is compatible with this aim since it “is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex reality (or realities) surrounding the program” (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972, p. 30). Within the illuminative evaluation approach the researcher’s role is to explore and describe the complexities in the programme’s context. Accordingly, different techniques are combined in order to view the problem in a number of different ways, and to cross check findings. Parlett and Hamilton (1972) recommend gathering information through observation, interviews, questionnaires and documentary or background information and whilst quantitative data are gathered, qualitative data are particularly valued in that they help to explain, evaluate and contextualise findings. This approach is also compatible with a constructivist paradigm that emphasises multiple perspectives and considers the cultural context to be important.

This approach provides in-depth information that serves to guide the decision-making process. I consider an illuminative evaluation methodology to be advantageous in the current study given its attention to multiples perspectives and sources of information, which will potentially inform decisions about the appropriateness of mentoring as a parish programme, or the suitability of an alternative adult-youth programme.
The Importance of a Focus on Context

The successful design and implementation of a programme relies on a thorough consideration of aspects of the programme’s context (Zeldin et al., 2008) and contexts vary widely according to a range of factors (Hawe, Shiell, Riley & Gold, 2004).

There is evidence that context can render a programme unsuccessful when programme aims and objectives do not correspond with their intended community context or culture (Zeldin et al., 2008). This means that a thorough consideration of programme design and community preparation prior to programme implementation is required in order to enable successful programme implementation.

The ‘capacity’ of the community or organisation surrounding the programme is an important factor involved in determining successful programme implementation (Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Evaluation can play an important role in building community capacity—the skills, assets and motivations related to the goals of successful programmes—since it can provide useful feedback and information that would help a community to know what its capacity is and what it needs to do to maximise programme success (Wandersman et al., 2006). There is also the need to evaluate the extent to which programme theory (purposes, values and assumptions) correspond with those of the community or organization concerned (Zeldin et al., 2008).

The interpersonal relationships within a programme’s context are likely to have an effect on the quality and effectiveness of the programme (Abma, 2006) and as outlined within the illuminative evaluation approach above, these
effects are likely to vary even when the programme design remains constant. Within this study interpersonal relationships between parish younger and older people feature as a factor that could influence programme effectiveness, whilst quality relationships between these groups is also a desired outcome. Therefore, choosing or developing an appropriate programme requires the consideration of interpersonal contextual factors.

Involving the community in pre-programme implementation investigation and decision-making is also related to successful outcomes. With regard to community involvement in programme development, it has been demonstrated that when a community ‘owns’ a project and incorporates its own needs, successful outcomes are more likely (Shediac-Rizkullah & Bone, 1998). Therefore, utilising the preferences and insights of stakeholder groups helps to inform the design of the programme or of the proposed intervention strategies (DuBois et al., 2006; Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2004). Obtaining different perspectives also helps to capture the complexity of the programme context, which is dynamic and constantly changing (MacCallum & Beltman, 2003).

Needs are highly context dependent and needs analysis helps to identify the particular needs evident in the target group(s) and whether these needs are likely to be satisfied by the programme in its intended form. If there is disagreement about how needs are defined within a context this can be advantageous since it “…can help to spark an important dialogue about how “need” should be defined…” (Davidson, 2005, p. 34).

Within the Five-Tiered approach to evaluation (Jacobs, 1988), needs analysis is conducted with the following purposes:
1. To document the need for a particular program within the community

2. To demonstrate the fit between community needs and proposed program

3. To provide “data groundwork.”

(Jacobs, 1988, p. 52)

Collecting information from prospective participants through surveys and interviews can contribute to an understanding of contextual factors that may have an important impact on the successful design and implementation of a community programme (Jacobs, 1988). I believe that employing an illuminative evaluation approach in a pre-programme implementation context will provide information very similar to that produced by a needs analysis.

Overall, within this sub-section it has been argued that context is an important pre-programme design and implementation focus and that assessing the needs of intended programme recipients is important to determining if a programme is needed or appropriate. In summary, the research methodology and methods adopted within this study seek to encompass multiple perspectives and meanings, to consult widely and to illuminate complex interpersonal dynamics to provide important contextual interpersonal information to inform programme design and implementation.
The Research Site and the Study Participants

The Research Site

This study takes place in an Anglican Parish in Perth, Western Australia where older people attend church in far greater proportions than younger people.

The parish incorporates two church sites located in adjoining suburbs within metropolitan Perth. The younger church site is situated in a suburb where most people own their own homes and house prices are above the Perth average. This suburb contains a larger percentage of two-parent families with one or more children and a similar percentage of one-parent families compared with the Perth Statistical Division\(^6\). With regard to age this suburb has a larger percentage of 70-84 and 12-17 year olds and a smaller percentage of 25-34 and 1-4 year olds than the Perth average. The newer church site has two regular Sunday services. The earlier service (7:45am) is fairly well attended by mainly older adults and a small number of younger children with their parents and grandparents. The later service (9:30am) is well attended by a range of age groups and parish young people attend this service exclusively. The newer church site incorporates a hall and an office building.

The older church site is located in a neighbouring suburb where most people own their own home and where house prices are very high compared with Perth’s average. In comparison with the Perth Statistical Division this suburb contains a similar percentage of two-parent families with one or more children, but less single-parent families compared with the Perth Statistical Division. In

terms of age this suburb has a larger percentage of 50-69 year olds and a lower percentage of 0-4 and 25-34 year olds than the Perth average. This church has one regular Sunday service (8am), which attracts a small number of mainly older adults.

During the 9:30am service (at the younger church site) it is usual for children and young people to participate in their own activities in the hall and office facilities. Secondary school aged young people sometimes attend a faith-based discussion group with the CYMC at this time and a couple of young women supervise a small crèche facility that is provided during the 9:30am service. Occasionally a young person (late primary school aged) assists with the younger children’s programme that is run in the hall. A young person operates the sound system during the 9:30am church services and on the 2nd and 5th Sundays a small group of young people lead the music. During 2006 a number of young people (late primary school aged) trained as servers and were regularly assigned to assist the clergy during this church service.

The Research Participants

A main concern within this study was to include as many parish adults and young people as possible in order to communicate that each individual’s perceptions, beliefs and expectations were valued and important to the outcomes of the study. Accordingly a variety of approaches and invitations were extended to parish members aged 16 years and over. Because comparisons between the categories of ‘young person’ and ‘adult’ are central to this study, consideration was given to where best to access these groups. Given that youth are a very small group in the parish compared with adults a purposive approach to sampling
was adopted. Purposive sampling involves getting “…all possible cases that fit particular criteria, using various methods” (Neuman, 2000, p. 196). Young people received invitations to be involved in the study through church services (survey and interviews), by myself (a personal invitation to be interviewed) and through their connection with youth activities in the parish (the CYMC identified and invited these young people to participate in focus groups).

Young people’s focus groups were incorporated into activities designed to be attractive to young people. In collaboration with the CYMC I arranged a young women’s retreat day at the home of a parishioner. This day included beauty treatments, a shared meal and a short communion service (held outdoors). The CYMC arranged a mixed-age men’s retreat at a monastery and I conducted the young men’s focus group as part of that weekend. All young people who received an invitation to participate in a focus group or an interview accepted, including three young people who had previously been involved in parish youth activities but who were no longer actively participating.

It was important to involve a wide range of adults in the study, especially with regard to age group membership, so that all generations of adults were adequately represented. Adults were invited to participate in the survey and focus groups through Sunday church services, the parish bulletin and by parish group leaders. A range of parish adults accepted the invitation to participate in this study including parish staff, those with ministry roles, previous youth leaders, parents of young people, etc.

Careful consideration has been given to the way that adult data are presented in the study vis-à-vis youth data and overall a similar number of youth quotes are presented alongside those of adult age groups.
Table 5 shows how many adults and young people participated in the survey, interviews and focus groups. The adult data has been divided into middle and older age groups in order to differentiate between those who may currently be parents of parish young people and those who are not. However, some of the older study participants have experienced having young people grow up in the parish.

Table 5.

The Gender and Age Group Membership of Study Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUPS</th>
<th>SURVEY</th>
<th>INTERVIEWS</th>
<th>FOCUS GROUPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people (12-25 years)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle aged people (26-65 years)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older people (66-86+ years)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Five of 7 young people participated in both the survey and an interview. Two of 17 young people participated in both an interview and a focus group. One of 17 middle aged people participated in both an interview and a focus group. Six of 23 older people participated in both an interview and a focus group.

Participant Overlap between the Survey, Focus Groups and Interviews

There was some overlap in participants between data source forms. The parish-wide survey was anonymous except where people indicated that they wished to be interviewed about their mentoring-like experiences in the parish (n=27). There was complete overlap between those adults who volunteered to be
interviewed and their having completed a survey form. Two young people that did not complete survey forms through church attendance agreed to be interviewed about their mentoring-like experiences within the wider parish community (neither of these young people attended focus groups). Some people who were interviewed also participated in a focus group, but the information collected in each forum was different. The interviews focused upon the experiences of those with mentoring-like experiences in the parish and the focus groups discussed youth participation in the parish. Nine people in total attended both interviews and focus groups and the majority derived from the older adult age group. Consent forms were completed by all study participants and their parents (for young people aged between 16 and 18 years). Ethics committee approval for this study was granted 28th February, 2006 (Permit Number 2005/169).

Steering Committee

A steering committee consisting of six parish members or parish associates was set up to guide the research process, including the development of a parish-wide survey. The group included a range of age groups (young, middle and older) and stakeholders (a young person, a member of clergy, a parish counsellor/warden, the CYMC and a couple who had been involved in parish youth ministry in the past). The group discussed topics such as youth mentoring and youth participation at length and these discussions were recorded and transcribed. This approach facilitated a constructivist approach to the research methods because it allowed me to anticipate and make provision for multiple perspectives, expectations and beliefs in the development of the survey,
interview and focus group questions. Forming a steering group also enacted a participatory approach to the study since it allowed some people with experience working with young people, some likely to be involved in decision-making regarding the project and some likely to be impacted by the project, to have input into the research process.

Data Gathering Methods

A range of data gathering methods was used to explore the perceptions and expectations of parish members around youth mentoring and youth participation as well as to illuminate areas of commonality and difference between young people and adults in the study context. A parish survey, interviews, focus groups, documentary evidence and observations were used to gather both quantitative and qualitative information.

The purpose of utilising a mixed-method approach within this study was to broaden and deepen the understandings reached (complementarity) and to be contextually responsive (Greene, 2005). Whereas ‘triangulation’ incorporates multiple methods to demonstrate convergent findings, Greene and Caracelli point out that multiple methods are also useful in promoting ‘expansion’ or a fuller picture of a programme (or the programme context in the current study) (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). A range of data gathering tools have been used within this study in recognition that: (a) some people feel more comfortable expressing themselves in some forums as opposed to others (written, verbal - one-to-one or a group discussion); and that, (b) some methods are better at gathering particular kinds of information than others. Rather than relying on one or two data
gathering tools, a range has been used so that the overall description of youth-adult relationships and youth participation in the parish will be richer and more meaningful.

The study began with the administration of a parish survey, which was designed to provide an overview of parish opinion as well as some detail regarding people’s perceptions and expectations around youth mentoring and youth participation. During the month of survey administration, observations of adult-youth interactions were conducted in the hall following the 9:30am service. Those who indicated that they had had parish-based mentoring experiences on their survey forms were then interviewed. Focus groups were held when most of the interviews had been conducted and were arranged at times that suited the majority of those who volunteered to participate. Parish bulletins and other youth related parish documents were gathered throughout 2006.

Survey

Purpose

A parish wide survey instrument was developed to investigate the current perceptions and expectations of parish members regarding mentoring and youth participation. The survey was aimed at people who attended a regular church service in the parish and questions were designed to be accessible by people with a range of educational backgrounds and ages.

Question development

My main goal in devising the survey questions was that they should be broad enough to incorporate or facilitate a range of responses. This was based on my understanding from the literature reviewed that youth mentoring and youth
participation can take a range of forms and levels, or be implemented for a range of reasons. It was important to allow survey respondents to tell me what they thought was important, beneficial or concerning as these contextual factors influence programme development, implementation and evaluation. My personal knowledge of typical activities during church services and in the parish more generally informed the options provided for some of the questions.

The survey inquired about three main aspects of parish relating: close relationships, mentoring-like relationships and youth participation.

The first main question of the survey asked about respondent’s close parish relationships. The question asked respondents to identify their six closest relationships with non-family members in the parish and their age group membership. The question allowed me to identify already existing non-family relationships between young people and adults in the parish. I provided this question based on my understanding from the intergenerational and youth-adult partnership literatures that relationships can form between young people and adults that may not be defined as mentoring relationships. Responses to the question provide a baseline of close adult-youth relationships as well as indicating any patterns of intergenerational relating. This question also allowed the identification of gaps and strengths in current parish relating between young people and different age groups of adults.

The next part of the survey enquired about respondent’s mentoring-like relationships in the parish. I provided a definition of mentoring-like relationships that excluded parental relationships but allowed for other family relationships to be included. This was based on my awareness that intergenerational family groups worship together in the parish and that
grandparents or uncles and aunts might assume a mentoring-like role with younger relatives. A group of three questions invited respondents to indicate any current or past mentoring-like involvements in the parish (with adults, with young people and as young people) to gauge overall parish-based mentoring experiences and to identify those who might be willing to discuss their experiences in more depth during a personal interview.

The youth mentoring literature identifies a range of benefits that might be experienced as a result of participation in a mentoring programme, but the focus is mainly on benefits to the young person. The intergenerational and youth-adult partnership literatures also identify a range of adult benefits from participation in adult-youth relationships. I presented two open questions about what benefits respondents thought a parish-mentoring programme might offer young people and older people (adults). I asked open questions because I wanted to discover what participants perceived to be potential benefits in their own context. I wanted to identify if respondents expected different benefits for youth versus adults as well as any areas where both age groups were expected to benefit in similar ways. The information gathered was also expected to identify valued outcomes for a parish-mentoring programme.

When contemplating the introduction of a parish youth mentoring programme, it is helpful to identify which areas of the parish’s ministry to young people the programme might most usefully address. To this end, the survey enumerated eight youth ministry areas: development as an Anglican, career development, spiritual development, family or relationship issues, community service, sense of wellbeing, gaining access to resources or support and giving money to the parish or caring for parish resources. Survey respondents were
asked to rate the importance of each of these areas as aspects of a parish ministry to young people as well as how likely they thought it that a parish-mentoring programme would assist in each. The options provided were based on my knowledge of some key programme outcomes identified within the youth mentoring literature as well as aspects of parish membership that I anticipated parish members might want to mentor young people in.

With regard to youth participation in the parish I asked both open and fixed-response questions. I asked respondents to identify both current and preferred levels of youth participation (frequency) in church services and in the parish community as well as any roles or activities (types of youth participation) that they were aware young people currently participated in within the parish. I provided a broad range of roles and activities that take place within the parish based on my personal knowledge. The aim of the questions was to access respondent perceptions and preferences.

The fixed-response questions were followed up with two open-ended questions asking respondents if they would feel uncomfortable with an increase or decrease in youth participation in the parish, and what their concerns would be. I wanted to find out if all respondent age groups were comfortable with the current level of youth involvement in the parish and if they wanted an increase or decrease in youth participation. The youth participation literature particularly aims to develop equitable participation between youth and adults in communities and organisations and it was important to check whether parish respondents were ready to embrace such principles. The ladder of participation identifies that there is a continuum of kinds of youth involvement with adults on projects. Consequently, I anticipated that parish members would have a range of reasons
for preferring more youth participation in the parish (or not) and that these would be identified as they explained their concerns about youth participation increasing or decreasing.

A copy of the survey instrument is provided in Appendix 1.

Validity of the survey

The related adult-youth relationship and youth participation literatures, expert and parish-based review and a pilot study in a nearby parish informed the development and administration of the survey instrument.

Dr Judith MacCallum, an expert in the field of youth mentoring, reviewed the survey instrument and advised on the content and format of the questions.

Prior to the administration of the survey a pilot study was conducted to assess the clarity and the ease of use of the survey instrument in a similar Anglican parish context. The pilot study took place in a nearby Anglican parish and pilot study participants were invited to provide feedback on the clarity and usefulness of the questions asked. Nineteen people responded to the pilot version of the survey and their comments were used to further develop the survey instrument.

Following the pilot study, members of the steering committee were invited to complete survey forms and to provide feedback or suggestions about the survey instrument and its administration in the parish.

Administration

Parish council members were given the opportunity to complete survey forms ahead of the rest of the parish and were invited to comment on the survey’s administration in the parish. At this time I was asked to administer the
survey during all three parish church services as opposed to the one church service attended by parish young people (as originally intended).

The parish-wide survey was administered over four consecutive Sundays in the two different church locations. Respondents (aged 16 and over) were able to return completed surveys to conveniently located survey boxes on the church/parish site or to post their surveys to Murdoch University in a reply paid envelope. In total 83 people returned valid survey forms including 76 adults (53 females, 23 males) and 7 young people (3 females, 4 males).

Response rate

Some significant challenges were faced in calculating a response rate for the survey, which was intended to represent the membership of the parish. However, determining the current membership of the parish proved very difficult in practice.

Although the parish does maintain a parish roll (a list of names, birthdates and contact details for those people who have completed a parish membership form), it was not up-to-date. The existing roll mainly included adults: some of who were deceased, had moved or had stopped attending at the parish. In addition, new parish members may not yet have been listed.

In the parish it is generally assumed that parish membership equates to church attendance. I also made this assumption with regard to the survey, but later observed that it excluded young people who were involved in parish activities but who did not regularly attend church services. Therefore, survey response rates roughly equate to adult parish membership, but are not representative of youth parish involvement.
Attendance at Sunday services fluctuates for each congregation and swells for special events such as baptisms (held during the service). Therefore the most reliable way to ascertain actual attendance during the survey month for all three services was to count attendance numbers for eligible respondents (16 years and over) on ‘typical’ Sundays. Because it was impossible for me to attend all of the services on the same day (two are held concurrently), the numbers of communicants recorded in the service registers during the survey month was also checked. The number of communicants recorded can include children under 16 and parish visitors, but it is more likely to include mainly youth and adult parish members than the overall attendance numbers, which are also recorded. On a ‘typical’ Sunday, communicant records provide a reasonably good estimate of eligible survey respondents. Therefore, for each parish congregation, a population range has been identified within which the actual number of eligible respondents would reside.

The number of people attending the 9:30am service was counted for two out of the four weeks that the survey was administered and once each for the 7:45am and 8:00am services respectively. At the 9:30am service during Weeks 1 and 4 of survey administration, I counted 68 and 75 people aged 16 years and over. A check of the services register for the survey month showed that on the three typical Sundays during the survey administration period (one Sunday included a baptism) the number of communicants recorded ranged from 65-85 for the 9:30am service. Fifty-seven survey forms were received from this congregation resulting in a response rate of between 67 and 88%.

I counted attendees at the 7:45am service once during the survey administration period (Week 4) and noted that 33 adults attended and no young
people or children were present. The number of communicants recorded for this congregation during the survey month ranged from 30-47. Eighteen surveys were returned from the 7:45am congregation resulting in a response rate of between 38 and 60%.

I counted attendees at the 8am service once during the survey administration period (Week 1) and noted that 18 adults and 2 children were in attendance. Communicant figures for the survey month were recorded in the service registry once during the survey administration period (Week 2 = 19). Eight surveys were returned from the 8:00am congregation resulting in a response rate between 42 and 44%.

In total 85 survey forms were returned to me, but two of these were not included in the data analysis. One form was excluded from analysis on the basis that demographical and congregational membership information was not supplied and over half of the survey form was left blank. The second form reached me after data analysis had begun and thus was not included in the study.

Response bias

It is notable that the survey response rates were lower for the 7:45am and 8:00am congregations (comprising 31% of all respondents). These respondents did not report having any young people regularly attending their church services and therefore may have experienced the survey as being irrelevant to their context, or more difficult to complete (e.g., some of the surveys returned by members of the 8:00am congregation commented that it was difficult to complete some of the questions since they did not really know about young people’s participation in the parish).
The consultation process that occurred with parish council prior to survey administration led to the recommendation that all three services be surveyed so that information might be gathered about the parish as a whole and so that no congregation would have cause to feel excluded from the study. I accepted at this time that response rates would very likely be lower for the two congregations with no young people in attendance but that because the survey asked respondents to indicate which congregation they most often attended, it would also be possible to analyse results by congregation.

Overall, it is evident from the response rate ranges reported above that survey information from the 9:30am congregation is more likely to reflect current experiences with parish young people and to adequately represent that congregation.

Figure 7 illustrates survey respondents by congregation.

Figure 7. Survey respondents by congregation.
Figure 8 illustrates the age groups of survey respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>16-25</th>
<th>26-35</th>
<th>36-45</th>
<th>46-55</th>
<th>56-65</th>
<th>66-75</th>
<th>76-85</th>
<th>86+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Respondents</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=14</td>
<td>n=24</td>
<td>n=10</td>
<td>n=2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8. Age groups of survey respondents.

Based on my personal knowledge of the parish, the age group proportions represented within the survey are a fair representation of those that exist in the worshipping communities of the parish. One exception is that there are likely to be greater proportions of older people than indicated (given the lower survey response rates in the 7:45am and 8:00am congregations). It should also be noted
that the proportion of young people connected with the parish more generally would also be slightly higher.

Participant Observation

Purpose

Interactions between adults and young people were observed in the hall after church services three times during the survey month. This information was gathered to help assess the closeness of adult-youth relationships in the parish and was used as one factor in assessing the potential of mentoring as an intervention to develop them.

Design and procedure

The observations were designed to establish whom young people tended to interact with after church services and the approximate length of the interaction between young people and adults. Interactions were judged as to whether they were short (less than one minute), medium (between one minute and two minutes) or long (two minutes or more). I noted whether young people were interacting with clergy, the CYMC, peers, children, parents or unrelated adults.

Credibility

Observational information provided another source of information about adult-youth relationships within the parish. This information was very useful in indicating some of the behavioural aspects of the interpersonal parish context and was intended for use in conjunction with other data. This allowed me to provide
a fuller description of adult-youth relating in the parish and to determine the convergence or otherwise of data from varying sources (Mertens, 2005).

Interviews

Purpose

Informal and open-ended interviews were conducted with some parish members who had experienced mentoring-like relationships in the parish either in the past or currently. Personal interviews facilitated access to the experiences and perceptions of those with mentoring experiences as well as their expectations about a parish-based mentoring programme. This information allowed some comparisons to be made between the experiences and perceptions of adults and young people and contributed to assessing the potential of mentoring as an intervention to develop adult-youth relationships in the parish.

Question development

Questions were designed to explore the parish-based mentoring experience of interviewees and to facilitate their participation in the project by asking for their suggestions about the formation of the parish-based mentoring programme. Open questions were asked to allow the interviewee(s) to describe their own perceptions, expectations and experiences.

The following questions were asked:

1. Could you please describe the nature of your parish-mentoring-like experiences? (based on survey questions 4-6, Appendix 1)

2. What are some of the qualities or features that have promoted or limited the success of parish-based mentoring in your experience?
3. What suggestions or recommendations do you have about the structure and form of a new parish-based mentoring programme?

Procedures

Interviewees were interviewed individually or as a couple in their own homes or on-site in the parish (their choice). Interviews generally took between thirty minutes and one hour and were scheduled to suit the participant(s). In total 27 people participated in interviews including 22 adults (17 females, 5 males) and 5 young people (4 females, 1 male).

Because of the emphasis on participation within this study all of those that requested interviews on their survey forms were interviewed. This was considered to be an important way of facilitating a sense of involvement and influence upon the developing parish-based mentoring programme as well as ensuring that a range of voices were heard.

Credibility

I conducted a large number of personal interviews with parish members to ensure that the salient issues were identified and that a range of parish-based mentoring-like experiences was incorporated within this study.

An informal and open-ended interviewing style was achieved because I was already familiar with or known to most of the people that I interviewed. It was easy to establish rapport and participants were generally very willing to talk to me about their experiences of parish-mentoring-like relationships and programmes.
Asking open-ended questions and giving participants time to describe their own experiences was an important way of gaining insight into the complexities that can occur, particularly with regard to adult-youth relationships. This also allowed participants to describe in some detail the mentoring-like relationships that they had formed with young people or adults (past and present) and the ways that these relationships were developed and sustained within the parish context.

The parish historical context was an important influence that was captured through interviews and one that was considered likely to have an impact on current beliefs and expectations about mentoring as a parish initiative to be used with young people.

Focus groups

Purpose

The purpose of the focus groups was to allow an exploration of youth participation in the parish historically and currently. Focus groups were able to assist with accessing participant perceptions, expectations and experiences of youth participation as well as identifying areas of commonality and difference between the perceptions, expectations and experiences of young people and older people in the parish. Responses to questions can also assist with assessing the parish’s readiness to engage with a mentoring programme initiative that aims to develop youth-adult relationships and youth participation.

Questions

It was anticipated that focus groups would allow a richer kind of discussion to occur as different parish members interacted with one another and
gained access to each other’s opinions and insights. Questions asked during adult focus groups were designed to allow the sharing of:

1. Stories or experiences of young people in the parish (or wider Anglican community) that ‘inspired’ or ‘impressed.’
2. Stories or experiences of young people in the parish (or wider Anglican community) that were perceived as barriers to their participation.
3. Ideas about areas (and ways) that young people might increase their involvement in the parish.

Questions asked during youth focus groups were designed to allow the sharing of:

1. Stories or experiences in the parish (or wider Anglican community) that made young people feel valued or wanted.
2. Stories or experiences in the parish (or wider Anglican community) that were perceived as barriers to their participation.
3. Ideas about areas (and ways) that young people would be interested in increasing their involvement in the parish.

The focus group questions were designed to allow people to speak positively about other age groups (youth/adults) as well as to discuss difficulties or possibilities with regard to youth participation.

Procedure

Two adult focus groups and two focus groups for young people (one male group, one female group) were held. Adults were invited to volunteer to participate in a focus group through church notices whilst young people were sent a letter of invitation signed by the CYMC, the parish rector and myself. The
young women’s focus group occurred during a beauty retreat day and the young
men’s focus group occurred during a retreat weekend at a Monastery. During all
focus groups a parish member or parish associate experienced in group
facilitation was invited to facilitate the focus group to ensure that I could attend
to the content of the discussion whilst someone else took care of the process.
The facilitator helped to ensure that everyone got a chance to speak and that no
one dominated the conversation.

In total 30 people participated in focus groups including 18 adults (13
female, 5 male) and 12 young people (6 male, 6 female).

Credibility

Story telling between young and older people is a method that is thought
to help develop a sense of social context as well as assisting with decreasing
stereotypes about each other (MacCallum et al., 2006). Within the focus groups,
telling stories served to add depth and richness to the information gathered
within the survey, as people were able to connect with the experiences that they
had had around youth (or adults) and their parish participation. This facilitated a
richer and more detailed description of issues and perceptions concerning youth
participation in the parish.

Within the adult focus groups some of the survey data was presented as a
discussion point. This allowed for member checks of the way that I presented
the data (accessibility) and facilitated the expression of their own perceptions
around what fellow parish members (anonymous) had said collectively or
individually within the survey.
Documentary Evidence

Purpose

Gathering documentary evidence served to indicate ways that young people were represented or involved in the parish and the kinds of activities that were offered to young people. This information was gathered to help assess the closeness of adult-youth relationships in the parish and was used as one factor in assessing the potential of mentoring as an intervention to develop parish adult-youth relationships. It was also possible to make a comparison between parish-facilitated youth activities and adult activities (experiences).

Procedures

Parish bulletins (Sunday pew sheets), youth group notices, rosters and the Annual Meeting of Parishioners reports were collected during 2006. Analysis of the parish bulletins included identifying any references to youth activities or invitations to young people versus generic invitations and activities directed at adults.

Credibility

Forty-five parish bulletins from February 5th to December 10th were included in the analysis. The analysis excluded the three weeks preceding Christmas when Christmas children and youth activities are repeatedly advertised (these were captured in the December 10th bulletin) and January when no parish bulletin is produced. This information was very useful in indicating some of the behavioural aspects of the interpersonal parish context and was intended for use in conjunction with other data, facilitating a richer description. The information
gathered covered an extended period of time (almost a year) and served to capture many key parish activities during that time.

Approach to Analysis

The research approach adopted within this study includes some deductive elements but is largely inductive, in-line with the constructivist paradigm (qualitative).

The initial approach taken within this study was to begin with the proposal that a formal youth mentoring programme would be the answer to youth ministry needs within the parish. This assumption was then checked against quantitative data gathered by the survey to ascertain whether there was sufficient support from parish members and stakeholders for a parish-based mentoring programme to be successfully implemented.

The survey included a number of closed questions including rating scales designed to determine: (a) the perceived importance of various aspects of youth ministry; (b) the likelihood that a mentoring programme would assist in those youth ministry areas; (c) the current frequency of young people’s participation in church or parish activities; (d) how often participants would prefer young people to participate in church or parish activities; and (e) whether or not participants would feel uncomfortable with a change in youth participation. These data were analysed using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to group the ratings and determine the frequency of responses within each category. Age group membership was an important independent variable that was cross-tabulated with responses to investigate any age related patterns of responding.
The study also considered the fit between the characteristics and features of youth mentoring programmes and the existing parish culture. In order to illuminate important aspects of parish culture surrounding youth ministry it was important to adopt a largely inductive approach to the study. “Inductive analysis begins with specific observations and builds toward general patterns. Categories or dimensions of analysis emerge from open-ended observations as the inquirer comes to understand patterns that exist in the phenomenon being investigated” (Patton, 2002, p. 56). This was achieved in the study by beginning with the perceptions, expectations and experiences of participants reported through the survey, interviews and focus groups and then looking for emerging themes.

The study produced an enormous amount of qualitative data in the form of interview and focus group transcripts as well as responses to the open-ended questions in the survey. The raw data were reduced through a process of coding quotes according to who said them (young, middle, older) and their main thematic content (e.g., change, belonging, responsibility, relationship, faith/spiritual development, etc).

All coded material was then entered into a Microsoft Access database that allowed me to identify the number of instances of particular themes and what age groups had identified them. This facilitated the development of a typology of the survey data outlining mentoring benefits for older and younger people and concerns about increasing or decreasing youth participation in the parish. It also enabled me to compare and contrast younger and older people’s concerns or experiences. I crosschecked the typologies with interview and focus group data
to identify themes that had not emerged within the survey as well as interview and focus group findings that corroborated survey findings.

Possible Threats to the Credibility of the Research

Two issues can be identified as potential threats to the credibility of this study: (a) small numbers of youth participants; and, (b) the inclusion of those with positions of authority in the parish within the study.

Due to ethical considerations (dependency issues) it was only possible to include young people aged 16-25 in the research project. At the time this research was conducted I was involved with leading ministry activities with parish children and young people aged up to 15 years and had children of my own in the parish within the 12-15 year old age group. Therefore it was not possible to include parish young people aged 12-15 in this study given that my involvement in another capacity might influence their responses. I did not have any involvement in the upper secondary youth group activities however, nor did I have prior relationships with young people in the 16-25 year age group.

There is a difference of 13 years between the youngest and oldest young people and it would be unwise to assume that all of the needs or issues of parish young people as a group have been captured by this study. However, reference to the research literature concerning the 12-25 year old age group does ameliorate this gap to some extent. In addition, all study participants were asked to consider young people aged 12-25 when responding to youth-related questions.
Careful attention to balancing stakeholder views is an important criterion for attaining rigorous research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Young people are under-represented in the parish and it was not possible to access enough young people to provide an equitable comparison with adults. Therefore, careful attention has been paid to balancing the presentation of youth-derived data with adult-derived data within the results and discussion sections of this thesis so that neither perspective dominates.

Care was taken to ensure that those in positions of authority in the parish did not express their views publicly in a way that might influence the responses of parish members in the study. Members of parish staff (those paid by the parish) included in the study were: the parish rector, an assistant clergy, the CYMC and the parish office administrator. These people were included in the parish survey and interviews only (not focus groups) and their comments were not available to other study participants. One exception was the assistant member of clergy who was involved in the steering committee (their comments were limited to this group) and who attended the last ten minutes of the young women’s focus group where they chose to share some of their own stories of youth participation.

No obvious differences between the experiences or opinions of parish staff and those of others included in the study have been identified. Their anonymity has been maintained (their responses are identified by age group only). One reason for this lack of difference is probably that aside from parish staff where authority structures are hierarchical, there are a number of leadership positions, retired clergy and ex-youth leaders or Sunday school leaders in the parish. These people have both experience and authority in their own right and
are likely to have experienced similar responsibilities to parish staff.

Observational and documentary data provided additional information about the parish culture and corroborated statements made by individuals during interviews and focus groups.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

This purposes of this study are to: a) explore the interpersonal and cultural-institutional context of the parish prior to the design and implementation of a formal adult-youth programme; (b) consult both young people and adults about their perceptions, expectations and experiences concerning youth mentoring and youth participation in the parish: and (c) assess whether a youth mentoring programme is the most appropriate adult-youth programme to implement in the parish given its context. In this study I sought to begin the process of identifying needs regarding youth-adult relationships and youth participation in the parish community.

There are three main sections to this chapter. Firstly, perceptions of the value of mentoring are presented, particularly its perceived benefits for older and younger participants and its relevance to specific areas of youth ministry. Secondly, adult-youth relationships in the parish are discussed with a view to illuminating interpersonal, cultural or institutional influences. Thirdly, data relating to youth participation in the parish are presented to highlight adult and youth needs. This chapter begins with broader perspectives on youth mentoring in general and progresses to explore adult-youth relationships and youth participation in the parish in increasingly more depth and detail.

In total, 19 young people and 88 adults are represented within the findings reported in this chapter. Young people are a small group within the parish community and this study only accessed young people aged sixteen years and over for ethical reasons (dependency issues). Nonetheless, youth voice is
very important within this study and youth perceptions and preferences have been presented wherever possible to balance youth and adult voices.

Perceptions of the Value of Mentoring

This section of the chapter particularly pertains to the research questions:

- What are the perceptions and expectations regarding youth mentoring prior to the implementation of a parish-based mentoring programme?

- What are the areas of commonality and difference among the perceptions, beliefs and expectations of young people (16-25), middle aged people (26-65) and older people (66+) in the study context?

The findings presented in this section derive from the parish survey and personal interviews conducted with parish members.
Parish Ministry to Youth and the Relevance of a Parish-based Mentoring Programme

As part of this study it was desirable to ascertain important youth ministry goals as well as determine if mentoring was a programme intervention that parish members had confidence in. Survey respondents were asked to consider two questions, “How important are each of the following areas as aspects of a parish ministry to young people?” and “How likely is it that a parish-based mentoring programme will assist young people in each of the following areas?” For analysis, responses were divided into three categories: Low/Unlikely (1 and 2), Medium/Neutral (3) and High/Likely (4 and 5). Figures 9 and 10 present the aggregated responses to these two questions.
Figure 9. Perceived importance of eight areas representing aspects of a parish ministry to young people.

Responses (n=81) have been segmented by age group. Two respondents did not answer this question.
Figure 10. Perceived likelihood that a parish-based mentoring programme will assist young people in specified ministry areas.

Responses (n=80) have been segmented by age group. Three respondents did not answer this question.
Figures 9 and 10 indicate that overall, respondents considered spiritual
development and a sense of wellbeing to be important ministry areas for young
people and that a mentoring programme was likely to assist in both. Family and
relationship issues was another ministry area that the majority of respondents
indicated was of high importance and that a mentoring programme would likely
assist with. Development as an Anglican was ranked sixth out of the eight youth
ministry areas considered, but was ranked third in terms of the likelihood of a
mentoring programme assisting.

Given that ministry to young people is the main purpose for considering a
parish-mentoring programme, it is important to carefully consider youth
preferences regarding both the important areas of youth ministry and their
confidence that mentoring would assist with them. Tables 6 and 7 present the
same questions according to the proportion of each age group that answered in a
particular way. The table rows (categories) have been arranged in descending
order according to the proportions of ‘high/likely’ responses.
Table 6.
Perceived Importance of Ministry Areas by Age group Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry Area</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage of young people n=7</th>
<th>Percentage of middle aged people n=40</th>
<th>Percentage of older people n=34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual development</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium importance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of wellbeing</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium importance</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family or relationship issues</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium importance</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development as an Anglican</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium importance</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium importance</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to resources or support</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium importance</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving money to parish or caring for resources</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium importance</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development</td>
<td>High importance</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium importance</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low importance</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. n=81 (2 respondents did not answer this question)
Table 7.

Perceived Likelihood that Mentoring Will Assist by Age group Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry Area</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage of young people n=6</th>
<th>Percentage of middle aged people n=40</th>
<th>Percentage of older people n=34</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual development</td>
<td>Likely to assist</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unlikely to assist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development as an Anglican</td>
<td>Likely to assist</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unlikely to assist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of wellbeing</td>
<td>Likely to assist</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unlikely to assist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family or relationship issues</td>
<td>Likely to assist</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unlikely to assist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service</td>
<td>Likely to assist</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unlikely to assist</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to resources or support</td>
<td>Likely to assist</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unlikely to assist</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving money to parish or caring for resources</td>
<td>Likely to assist</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unlikely to assist</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development</td>
<td>Likely to assist</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unlikely to assist</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. n=80 (3 respondents did not answer this question)
Age related comparisons illustrate that most survey respondents valued spiritual development and a sense of wellbeing as high-importance ministry areas (between 91% and 100% of respondents). However, according to youth respondents a youth mentoring programme is more likely to support youth spiritual development (83%) than a sense of wellbeing (33%).

Difference across the age groups was also apparent regarding the importance of development as an Anglican as a ministry area to young people with 15% of middle aged people considering this ministry area to be of low importance to young people compared with no young people or older people. Only around 60% of young people considered this ministry area to be of high-importance. In addition, only 68% of older people thought that mentoring was likely to assist in this ministry area compared with 100% of young people. It is somewhat surprising that young people were far more optimistic about the contribution of mentoring to their development as an Anglican than older people. Combined, these results suggest that young people perceived a parish-based mentoring programme to be more likely to benefit their faith and spiritual development than their sense of wellbeing.

Overall, young people were divided as to whether family and relationship issues was an area of high or medium importance to them and whether they thought that mentoring was likely to influence this area of their lives or whether they were neutral about its likely impact. Age group differences were apparent regarding the ministry area of family and relationship issues for both importance as a ministry area and the likelihood of mentoring assisting. With regard to the former, only half of youth survey respondents ranked this as a ministry area of high importance (50%) compared with adult age groups (83-85%). With regard
to the latter, most adult respondents considered that mentoring was likely to assist with family and relationship issues (74-78%) compared with only half of youth respondents (50%).

In addition to the four main areas identified above, some other noticeable age group differences emerged within the study findings. Compared with adult age groups, young people considered community service to be an area of low importance (33% of young people compared with 5% of adults) and less young people considered access to resources or support to be of high importance (33% of young people compared with 75% of middle aged and 60% of older people).

Age differences were also apparent when respondents were asked to consider whether a parish-based mentoring programme would be likely to assist or not. No young people (0%) thought that this kind of programme would assist with career development whereas 32-33% of adults thought it was likely to. Although 56-63% of adult age groups thought that mentoring was likely to assist in the area of community service, only 33% of young people supported this view. Youth respondents also indicated that mentoring was less likely to assist with access to resources or support and giving money to the parish or caring for resources than adult age groups.

Overall, spiritual development was the one youth ministry area that all age groups agreed was both important and likely that mentoring would assist with. It is also notable that young people considered mentoring likely to assist with their development as an Anglican (although development in this area was not of high importance to all young people). These two areas emerge as areas of ministry to young people where mentoring would be well received as an appropriate intervention by adults and young people alike.
Benefits of a Parish-Based Mentoring Programme for Younger and Older People

Asking parish members about the benefits that they anticipated from implementing a parish-based mentoring programme was an important way of gauging their expectations. Survey respondents were invited to provide responses to two open-ended questions asking, “What do you think a mentoring programme in this parish might offer younger (older) people?” Responses to these questions were separated into idea statements, entered into a database and then grouped thematically according to key words or topics. Ten main categories emerged: *Friendship opportunities, faith and spiritual development, new relationships with other generations, development of a sense of community, support and safety, learning and challenge, guidance, new opportunities to share, increased sense of purpose and planning for succession.*

Table 8 cites examples of the statements that respondents made regarding the benefits of a parish-based mentoring programme for younger and older people within the ten main categories. Statements have been divided into interpersonal benefits (those experienced within the mentoring relationship) and individual benefits (those that result personally). Respondents who provided more than one idea or topic related to the overall benefits for older or younger people were counted once only. The number of survey respondents who contributed to that sub-category is indicated within each table cell. If respondents made a comment that applied to two categories, it was repeated in each. The table categories (rows) have been arranged in descending order according to the total number of respondents. A full account of respondent statements is presented in Appendix 2.
Table 8.
Perceived Benefits of Mentoring for Young People and Older People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Interpersonal development</th>
<th>Individual development</th>
<th>Interpersonal development</th>
<th>Individual development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friendship opportunities</td>
<td>Examples: Chance to &quot;know&quot; others; companion along the way; a place of friendship and acceptance outside family or other roles and expectations; the joy of being together; someone's who is interested and cares about them n=46</td>
<td>Examples: Self-esteem, love; the realization that they are cared for by an older person; early development of a sense of well being. n=4</td>
<td>Examples: Friendship; communication, meaningful relationship; a chance to interact with youth; love opportunity; someone to talk to outside the family; companionship, encouragement. n=17</td>
<td>Examples: Sense of wellbeing; less self-centredness; the chance to feel like someone needs them. n=3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith and spiritual development</td>
<td>Examples: Avenue along which to explore faith; nurturing in faith and life; sense of encouragement to explore their spiritual formation as individuals; guidance of how to develop a closer relationship with Christ. n=43</td>
<td>Examples: Spiritual development; sense of access to faith tradition; better knowledge of Christianity. n=12</td>
<td>Examples: Help them develop in faith and life; the opportunity to share faith with the younger generation; fresher, newer, approaches to worship; supporting an older person's faith. n=8</td>
<td>Examples: A re-engagement with their own faith and relationship with Jesus; to develop and foster their spiritual life. n=6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New relationships with other generations</td>
<td>Examples: Inclusivity and connection across the age ranges; the opportunity of the love and fellowship that 'older' members will give and share with them; help to dispel &quot;us and them&quot; attitudes between younger and older people; including more mature folk. n=40</td>
<td>An acceptance/understanding that age ensures folk take longer awareness of how differently older people sometimes view situations. n=1</td>
<td>Examples: A chance to explore younger minds; help to dispel &quot;us and them&quot; attitudes between older and younger people; generation gap bridging; to break barriers between old and young; generation gap bridging. n=16</td>
<td>Examples: Understanding of other generations and points of view; …keep the 'older' feeling young; hope for the future. n=11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development of a sense of community</strong></td>
<td>Examples: Grow within the parish; a place of hospitality and welcome; development of more effective community; acceptance within the church. n=40</td>
<td>Examples: A sense of connection; a sense of affirmation and (true belonging). n=18</td>
<td>Examples: Development of a more effective community; opportunity for involvement; better sense of community. n=5</td>
<td>Satisfaction of involvement; a sense of being part of a group, of having something to offer. n=7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Support and safety</strong></td>
<td>Examples: The opportunity for support; a safe person to turn to - to discuss any issue that may challenge them in their lives; to know someone outside their peer/age group to talk over worrying issues, as and if they arise. n=25</td>
<td>Examples: To develop into well adjusted individuals; understanding of family or relationship issues… n=4</td>
<td>Examples: Support systems; I think this is already in place in that the Church family looks out and cares for others; opportunity to support younger parishioners as above (support as an extension of family support). n=7</td>
<td>Family or relationship issues; gaining access to resources or support. n=1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning and challenge</strong></td>
<td>Examples: A knowledge of ways and thoughts of others; an opportunity to get to know a wider variety of views; someone to look up to and learn from. n=4</td>
<td>Examples: Life experience, knowledge and understanding; personal development. n=9</td>
<td>Examples: Exchange of views - a widening of their world-view; the learning can go both ways; a knowledge of ways and thoughts of others; learn from their partner (mentoree). n=4</td>
<td>Examples: Satisfaction and challenge …may have boundaries stretched; a broader understanding... n=11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guidance</strong></td>
<td>Examples: Guidance; direction, answers; guidance in day to day living; bring to their attention love, respect to elders; enabling the young to see possibilities in life they might not otherwise be aware of. n=17</td>
<td>Sense of direction. n=1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A sense of purpose</strong></td>
<td>Sense of purpose, ministry; meaning and purpose in their Christian lives; purpose in life; fulfilment. n=8</td>
<td>Examples: Sense of purpose and nurturing - the growth of the church; opportunity for ministry; opportunity to be of service, if they have the time to do so. n=4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of purpose, ministry; meaning and purpose in their Christian lives; purpose in life; fulfilment. n=8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New opportunities to share</strong></td>
<td>Share gifts; opportunity to discuss their faith; to benefit from the wisdom of the mentor. n=3</td>
<td>Examples: A chance to revisit ones own experiences; share life wisdom and experience; a chance to share their skills and knowledge…. n=7</td>
<td>Example: A sense that they have something of value to share (not wealth n=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Planning for succession</strong></td>
<td>Introduction to some parish activities (jobs). n=1</td>
<td>Opportunity to pass on traditions. n=1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Contribution to the future of the parish. n=1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=71 respondents identified benefits for young people and n=73 respondents identified benefits for older people
Figure 11 presents an overview of the number of respondents who identified youth or adult benefits within each category. The number of respondents who identified interpersonal and individual benefits has been amalgamated within each category. The categories have been arranged in descending order from left to right.

When considering benefits to young people respondents were asked to include those aged 12-25. When considering benefits to older people respondents were asked to include adults aged 26+ years. 71 respondents commented on benefits for younger people and 73 respondents commented on benefits for older people.
Figure 11. Perceived mentoring benefits for youth compared with older people.
The patterns of responding illustrated in Figure 11 indicate that overall, a parish-mentoring programme is primarily expected to offer benefits in the areas of: friendship opportunities, faith and spiritual development, new relationships with other generations, development of a sense of community and support and safety (between 37 and 46 respondents identified benefits in these five categories).

It is interesting that more respondents expected young people to benefit (rather than older people) in the areas of faith and spiritual development, development of a sense of community and support and safety. These are probably areas where survey respondents expected older people (as adults and mentors) to be able to offer greater experience and wisdom to younger people. It is also interesting that more respondents expected older people to benefit (rather than younger people) in the area of new relationships with other generations. This may indicate that survey respondents expected contact with a different generation to have particular benefits for older people (adults). Learning and challenge was the only area where both older people and young people were expected to benefit in approximately equal proportions, although friendship opportunities also presented as an area where both older people and young people would likely benefit. Guidance was the only area where young people were considered to benefit exclusively and this is likely indicative of a more traditional model or expectation of mentoring.

 Experiences of a Past Parish-based Mentoring Programme

This subsection presents findings regarding a previous parish ministry programme to children and young people. It is important to take into account prior
experiences with a mentoring-like parish programme as these may impact on adults’
willingness to participate in another similar programme as well as identifying areas
where parish members would want things to be done differently.

Approximately three years ago a middle aged person in the parish set up a
‘Buddy Programme’ aimed at developing relationships between Sunday school
children/young people and adults in the 9:30am congregation. The adults were invited
to attend Sunday school activities and to develop a relationship with that particular child
at church on Sundays. A total of 21 survey respondents indicated that they had been
involved in the buddy programme and 12 of them consented to be interviewed. Two out
of seven young people who completed surveys reported prior involvement in the Buddy
Programme and one of them agreed to an interview.

The number of people who reported being involved in the Buddy Programme
indicates a general willingness on the part of parish members to be involved in
mentoring-like relationships with parish youngsters. Some of those interviewed related
that they had developed meaningful relationships through their involvement in the
Buddy Programme. A young person said, “…my little sister was in it as well and her
buddy was [name of an older person]…so I got to know him well through that and as I
grew up…and even now I still talk to him every now and again and go and have dinner
with them and catch up…” An older person reported, “I had a buddy and it worked
really well actually, I liked it, and we got along very well and also it helped me to get to
know the family quite well.”

A small group of adults who had been involved in the Buddy Programme
suggested some ways that it could have been improved and these are important
considerations if people are to be engaged in another mentoring-like programme in the parish. An older person commented that “…it just drifted” and suggested that a yearly review would have been ideal, with the opportunity to have a new buddy at that stage, “…which would be good to get a new experience…” Another older person commented on the lack of training saying, “…I suspect some people who had sort of dropped away from their buddies didn’t really understand the process, so I think the training would have been valuable…” Programme clarity and direction was identified as an area for improvement with a middle aged person commenting that,

I think the buddy system as it operated probably didn’t have enough time put into it, enough clarity about its purpose and expectations, the role of mentors, enough energy from the people who wanted it implemented (into the planning of it).

More events and opportunities for buddies and their mentors to come together were also suggested. Another middle aged person suggested, “More events where they could come together and talk to each other…and move into the spiritual stuff too” would be a good idea.

**Benefits of Parish-Based Mentoring Relationships**

A very small number of parish adults and young people reported that they had established informal mentoring relationships as part of their parish involvements. Four of the nine young people who were surveyed or interviewed described parish-based mentoring relationships that they were currently involved in, including those they had been involved with previously (still as young people). All of the young people who reported current mentoring relationships included the parish CYMC. A couple of the young people included in this section also reported mentoring relationships that they had
developed in other Anglican parishes and these are included as they illustrate aspects of parish-based mentoring relationships that young people value. A total of three adult study respondents (other than the CYMC) were identified as being in current mentoring relationships with parish young people and their comments (or accounts of their involvement) are included in this section also.

Youth and adults involved in parish-based mentoring relationships have identified faith and spiritual development as important aspects of their relationships. This finding reflects previously presented survey findings indicating that most respondents considered that mentoring was likely to assist in these areas of ministry to young people (Table 7) and that faith and spiritual development was one of the most identified mentoring benefits for young people (Table 8). Adult mentors identified support and a sense of wellbeing as being benefits experienced by the young people that they were in mentoring relationships with. As identified in Table 8, these are areas that adults perceived were mentoring benefits for young people to a greater extent that young people themselves. Feeling welcome or a sense of belonging was identified as a mentoring benefit by young people included in this section and this was identified as an anticipated benefit of a mentoring programme (Developing a sense of community) in Table 8. Building social networks including other young people, adults and parish activities was an area of benefit that young people identified during interviews that is likely connected to developing a sense of community also.

Having a relationship with an adult that allowed a young person to experience God for himself or herself or to ask faith-related questions was an important aspect of mentoring for some of those interviewed. One young person stated that, “The way I see
it, people can’t tell you who God is or what to believe, you need someone…you want someone to remind you…not to tell you…so it’s more of a reminding you that something higher is there…” A middle aged person who was involved with mentoring a parish young person stated that,

I think she needed the space to question, because she was in a space where she was questioning a lot…she was feeling very pressured to get into [organised religion]…she was able to talk about things and just talk about what her questions are at the moment…

Some adults who were involved in mentoring-like relationships with parish young people identified that they were available to offer guidance and support or a sense of wellbeing when the young person was experiencing challenges. One older person said,

I was just saying that when she started off at her new school she was being bullied and I went and spoke to her…well obviously I was concerned for her, but I was really trying to help her to see that in some ways you can take control of the situation…

One mentor felt that providing reinforcement and validating a sense of wellbeing was an important way of supporting her mentee.

Life organisational things and self-esteem are often things that come up. The [young] people seem very self-confident on the outside but often they have lots of questions about themselves…I’m able to reinforce…they get this validation and this positive reinforcement that they really need…there’s a lot of expectation and a lot of questions about themselves…

A benefit that was identified by a number of the young people in parish-based mentoring relationships was the welcome and sense of belonging that their mentor provided for them. One young person stated, “I think that if people like [name of an older person] and [name of the CYMC] hadn’t taken those steps I would not have been as comfortable…it wouldn’t have been the same…they made me feel accepted.” Another young person said that she valued that opportunity to talk with her mentor,
“…not necessarily about stuff that was bothering me or stuff that I needed to talk to someone about but just to come and know that after church we could have a chat and that kind of stuff.”

Parish adults who had established informal mentoring relationships with young people were also to help them build social networks by providing links to other young people, adults and activities in the parish as identified in the following quote from a young person, “…talking to [name of the CYMC] and then being able to expand it to other people.” Another young person said that, “[Name of the CYMC] was very supportive outside of church, [s/he] got me my job basically. [S/he] also introduced me to the music group and stuff like that…that made me feel more at home than I otherwise would have.”

**Summary of the Youth Mentoring Findings**

Findings presented in this section indicate that survey respondents (including young people) consider a parish-based mentoring programme to be a useful way of engaging young people in the parish, particularly in the ministry areas of spiritual development and development as an Anglican. A parish-based mentoring programme was particularly considered to offer young people benefit in the areas of faith and spiritual development, development of a sense of community and support and safety whereas adults (older people) were expected to benefit in the area of developing new relationships with other generations. Overall, most survey respondents expected that both young people and adults would benefit in the areas of friendship opportunities and learning and challenge.
Some participants involved in a past parish-based mentoring programme acknowledged that it had been a good way of developing relationships with parish youngsters and their families. Previous participants in the Buddy Programme were also able to identify ways that a parish-based mentoring programme could better support their involvement and these suggestions represent characteristics of effective mentoring programmes as outlined in the Literature Review chapter. Both youth and adult study participants who had experienced parish-based mentoring relationships identified a number of benefits including being able to ask faith-based questions, feeling welcome, developing connections with others (including activities) and offering support, guidance and validation to a young person.

The findings presented so far suggest a widespread belief in the potential of mentoring to develop youth-adult relationships within the parish. However, only three current mentoring relationships between parish adults and young people (outside of a formal youth ministry role) were reported.

Adult-Youth Relationships in the Parish

This section of the chapter particularly addresses the research question:

- What is the potential of mentoring as an intervention for developing youth-adult relationships in this parish?

Within the interview and focus group data, broader perceptions about adult-youth relationships emerged. These are presented below as an adjunct to the mentoring data because they illuminate a number of cultural traditions and occurrences that
potentially shape the nature of youth-adult relationships in the parish, including parish-based youth programmes.

Findings presented in this section derive from the parish survey, observations, parish bulletin analysis, interviews and focus groups.

**Existing Close Non-Family Relationships**

It is useful to explore the predominance of cross-generational relationships in the parish because these relationships could potentially be or become mentoring relationships. This information could also function as a baseline for the influence of a formal adult-youth relationship programme in the parish.

Survey respondents were asked to identify the 6 non-family members that they felt closest to within the parish along with the age-range that they belonged to. Table 9 shows the age groups of survey respondents and the age groups of those that they have their closest relationships with. The darker the colour, the more relationships occur between those age groups. The outlined cells running diagonally through the table indicate peer relationships.
Table 9.

Reported Age groups of Close Non-Family Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENT</th>
<th>16-25</th>
<th>26-35</th>
<th>36-45</th>
<th>46-55</th>
<th>56-65</th>
<th>66-75</th>
<th>76-85</th>
<th>86 plus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>86 plus</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<td>76-85</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66-75</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-25</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-11</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Relationships (6 and under)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Respondents</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
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Table Key:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. 83 people (all respondents) answered this question but 8 reported more than 6 relationships making impossible to identify their six closest relationships

Based on Table 9 it is evident that amongst young respondents, most have close relationships with those in their own peer group or two age groups higher than their own. 80% of close relationships reported by youth (16-25 year olds) were with people aged 45 and under. It is also notable that the 56-65s and the 86+ age groups claim no close relationships with young people.
A number of intergenerational relationships (those that skip a generation) are identified by the 16-25s with the 36-45s. However, those survey respondents who are 36-45 identify that only 2.6% of their close relationships are with young people. The adult age group most likely to identify close relationships with young people was the 76-85s (6.1%) whilst young people identified that 4% of their close relationships were with this age group. Young people did identify that 8% of their close relationships were with the 66-75s however, and the difference may be due to inaccurate age estimates on the part of young people. Table 9 indicates that there is potential for the further development of close adult-youth relationships in the parish, particularly involving adult age groups where close relationships with young people already occur.

Table 10 identified the age groups of respondents who identified fewer than six close parish relationships. People who reported only one close relationship could be considered to be more vulnerable socially within the parish and it is evident that this occurrence is spread across parish age groups.

Table 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUP OF RESPONDENT(S)</th>
<th>16-25</th>
<th>26-35</th>
<th>36-45</th>
<th>46-55</th>
<th>56-65</th>
<th>66-75</th>
<th>76-85</th>
<th>86+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of relationships</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=11
Parish Social, Cultural and Historical Ways of Relating to Youth

This sub-section outlines findings regarding youth activities within the parish compared with adult activities. Three main cultural norms are identified.

Youth Activities are Separate to Adult Activities

Current parish custom is for youth activities to be held separately to adult activities.

An analysis of the parish bulletin for reference to youth and youth activities was undertaken between 5th February, 2006 and 10th December 2006 (40 bulletins). The parish bulletin is made available to church attendees every week and includes general notices such as service times, set readings and prayers as well as notices about regular parish group activities, events and invitations from other parishes and church groups.

Analysis of the parish bulletins indicates that notice of regular and ongoing children’s activities (e.g., Sunday school and crèche) was made on a weekly basis whereas Live (the Sunday morning worship programme for high-school aged youth) was only referred to when in recess (11/40 bulletins). No reference was made to Joyful, the youth music group who led the music during the 9:30am church services on the 2nd and 5th Sundays of the month during 2006. Information regarding Live activities was made separate to the parish bulletin on A4 ‘flyers’ and included reference to “music/image, questions, silence, prayers, reflection, people” (Live, 2006). Live focused on topics such as “Mirror dimly lit – understanding” and “Rose is a rose - what defines you?” (May, 2006). The Live flyers were made available at the entrance to church and were displayed around the church and parish office site (where Live met) and therefore would
potentially have been viewed by parish adults. However, as can be seen from the topic 
headings reported above, they were not very informative about what young people were 
engaged with when they met separately during the 9:30am church service.

**Adult-Led Group Activities are Preferred**

Interview findings indicated that both young people and adults were comfortable 
with an adult-led group forum for youth activities.

During interviews, both young people and adults reflected the notion that one or 
two designated adults take responsibility for youth activities in the parish, whereas other 
parish adults are not involved in ministry to young people. A young person stated that, 
“…the CYMC was a relay and since they have gone no one tells us the positives. Um, 
because the youth coordinator was relaying the information back to us.” An older 
person’s view was that, “I think the eternal thing is that youth need a leader. I don’t 
think that changes with any generation. Youth look for role models. Youth must have 
someone who says ‘let’s go’…” Another young person reflected the view that youth 
need a leader who is closer in age to them by saying, “Youth form a special bond with 
people who are closer to your age, so whoever you brought in would have to be a bit 
like [name of CYMC] who is over thirty but still under ten.” Although this was the 
predominant view of youth activities, not all saw this as the most ideal way of 
proceeding. A middle aged person reflected that, “[Name of CYMC] has a lot of input 
into the youth here, in this parish, nobody else seems to have any other input. There’s 
not anybody else who puts time into the youth in this community.”

Some parish members who participated in interviews or focus groups discussed 
youth group activities as a positive experience that facilitated socialisation or interest. A
young person said, “I really enjoy the Sunday mornings, the teenage classes… it is very interesting just being able to discuss things…” An older person remembered that, “…the Christian Endeavour focused around groups…the youth group was a tremendous place for us to all meet…it was a focus point…the key centre was learning to socialise…”

Alongside these kinds of comments, there were some who suggested that one-on-one mentoring was unlikely to work in the parish context. A middle aged person said,

My experience of mentoring programmes that match people up is that they don’t really work and if they do work it’s sort of by accident because you might not get the sense of being the right person to be a helpful mentor…I think joint projects is good…just things that people can do and chat over…

Another middle aged person with experience in youth ministry said, “The reason that two people only didn’t work is because…if something happened one week then, like someone couldn’t come, then one partnership was left…and if you’ve got more than two people there it’s much easier to have a conversation…”

Youth Activities are Reliant on Leader Availability

It is customary for youth activities and groups in the parish to begin and end with staff or adult leader availability. An older person commenting on the history of youth leadership in the parish stated that, “it’s either been a youth pastor employed part-time or the various deacons who were here for 18 months or 2 years being landed with, ‘well one of your tasks will be to run these youth groups.’” When the assistant priest and CYMC left the parish at the end of 2006, many youth activities and involvements ceased.

The parish bulletin included invitations or notices with general appeal to adults for the following spiritual or faith-based activities: Lent study groups, parish quiet day, Evensong (traditional), small group bible studies, choir activities, Education for
Ministry, Caritas, meditation group, prayer chain, Anglican Men’s Society, Ladies’
Guild, Mother’s Union and pastoral assistant’s meetings (see Appendix 3). By contrast
to the youth activities, the adult groups were coordinated by a wide range of parish
members and were only sometimes reliant on parish staff. When the parish rector and
two priests left the parish between December 2006 and May 2007, many of the
established adult activities continued, such as the Ladies’ Guild, Anglican Men’s
Society and Mother’s Union. Overall, adult groups often continue despite changes in
parish staff or parish leaders, whereas youth groups are vulnerable when their leaders
move on from the parish.

Interaction and Communication Between Youth and Adults in the Parish

Some of the adults and youth involved in this study commented on the difficulty
that they experience talking to young people or older people. One older person said,
“I’m a little bit wary of the 12-16 age group because I find it difficult to get on their
wavelength.” Another older person said, “…maybe it’s the age I’m at but I don’t
understand the idioms that they understand…you don’t know what they’re talking about
because they have got this modified language…” A young person expressed the view
that segregation between youth and adults is inevitable. “There’s always going to be a
sort of segregation because I won’t go up to, you know, one of the elderly ladies and
sort of start talking about Britney Spiers or whatever…” Another older person reflected
the view that a lack of youth-adult interaction was because, “Kids are a bit shy of us…”

A couple of young people involved in this study indicated that they felt very
comfortable interacting with parish adults. One was a long-term parish member and the
other had been raised in the Anglican Church and attended services regularly. A young person recalled their involvement in community events.

On the day people would come in and see how it was going and it gave a kind of laid-back and fun environment to talk to people in, like the older ladies, I’d talk to them and I didn’t even really know who they were but I knew they were from the parish.

Another young person suggested that, “…adults shouldn’t just ask the question, ‘how’s school?’ Let’s try to find common ground because I guarantee you, every youth has something that they’re interested in…you’ve just got to find it.”

During the month that the parish survey was administered I observed adult-youth interaction in the parish hall three times following the 9:30am church service. Each time approximately 40 adults and between one and five young people attended the hall for a cup of tea or a chat. I observed with whom young people interacted and for how long: Short (less than one minute), Medium (between one minute and two minutes) or Long (two minutes or more).

My analysis revealed that these young people were most likely to interact with the CYMC, other young people or children. When interacting with unrelated adults young people were most likely to do this via their parent or the CYMC. Youth were most likely to have longer interactions with each other and children, but one long interaction between the CYMC and five young people was observed in the hall foyer during the observation period. One short and one long interaction between a young person and an unrelated adult was observed, both of which occurred with adults that s/he had ongoing relationships with. A detailed report of the interactions observed is contained in Appendix 4.
Some of those who participated in interviews or focus groups referred to young people feeling unwelcome or the need for adults to welcome young people more actively in the parish. One young person reported that,

I know [name of a young person] won’t stay for coffee because [s/he] doesn’t feel that [s/he] can relate to anyone in the parish because they have just been kind of bought into the parish cold…maybe a bit of work could be done on that and for [name of a young person] and [name of a young person] as well because they don’t really have much to do with the parish other than the young people…

An older person said, “I think the onus is on the older members of the congregation and the adult members of the congregation to be open to ways in which we, by our friendship, by our support…be thoroughly welcoming and encouraging of young people.”

Summary of the Adult-Youth Relationship Findings

Through exploring the topic of adult-youth close relationships it became apparent that the young people who contributed to this study felt most comfortable relating to those in their own age group or aged up to 45 years old. However, intergenerational activity was also identified between young people and adults in the 36-45 and the 66-75 (or 76-85) year old age groups in particular. When the parish is considered in historical terms it is apparent that there is a tradition of youth and adult activities being conducted separately from one another. In addition, there appears to be a cultural preference for youth activities to be conducted in groups. It is customary for youth activities to operate when there is a leader available to run them, but for them to end when that leader leaves the parish or gives up that role.

Data relating to social interactions indicate that in general, youth and adults may not feel comfortable interacting with one another, although one or two young people
evidence high levels of comfort interacting with parish adults. Some study participants have referred to communication difficulties between youth and adults or to young people feeling unwelcome in the parish outside of their youth activities.

The previous section of this chapter indicated that mentoring is an intervention that study participants perceive to be relevant to beneficial youth ministry. However, it is apparent within this section that youth-adult interaction and general adult involvement in the activities of young people is not an established parish practice. Current parish practice appears to favour one or two adults ministering to groups of young people and reported experiences suggest that one-on-one interactions can fail due to youth non-attendance or feelings of awkwardness.

Overall, general assumptions about youth being led by one or two people and an acceptance of youth ministries emerging and disappearing with the available personnel would need to be reconsidered before a long-term mentoring programme could be successfully implemented in the parish. In addition, the area of adult-youth communication and interaction has emerged as a useful place to provide support or training prior to engaging in a parish-based mentoring programme aimed at young people.
Youth Participation in the Parish

This section of the chapter particularly pertains to the research questions:

- What are the perceptions and expectations regarding youth participation prior to the implementation of a parish-based mentoring programme?
- What are the areas of commonality and difference among the perceptions, beliefs and expectations of young people (16-25), middle aged people (26-65) and older people (66+) in the study context?

Data presented in this section derive from the parish survey, personal interviews and focus groups conducted with parish members and parish bulletin analysis.

Youth Roles in Church Services and the Parish Community

Survey respondents were asked to identify activities concerned with the operation of church services in the parish that they understood young people to participate in currently. Respondents were provided with a range of options and were asked to check any activity that they thought applied. Table 11 presents the percentage of each age group that was aware of youth participation in each of the activities. The table has been arranged in hierarchical order.
Table 11.

Percent Aware of Youth Participation in Church Service Related Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Percentage of young people n=7</th>
<th>Percentage of middle aged people n=40</th>
<th>Percentage of older people n=29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound System</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godly Play (Setting up)</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offertory</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacristan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidesperson</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. n=76 (7 older people did not answer this question)
Young people are most often perceived to contribute to music, sound system operation, the set up of Godly Play and bringing up the offertory (communion elements). Table 11 indicates that youth were more aware of their own participation in the collection (collecting money during church services) and serving (assisting priests during church services) than adult respondents were. Table 11 also indicates that there are areas of activity associated with the operation of church services that survey respondents perceived to be conducted by adults only. According to young people, these areas include: administering communion, being a sacristan (preparing for church services), cleaning, being a sidesperson (welcoming and assisting others during church services) and leading prayer during church services.

A further question asked survey respondents to identify activities concerned with the parish community that young people currently participated in. Respondents were provided with a range of options and were asked to indicate any activity that they thought applied. Table 12 presents the percentage of each age group that was aware of youth participation in each of the activities. The table has been arranged in hierarchical order.
Table 12.

Percent Aware of Youth Participation in Community Related Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Percentage of young people n=7</th>
<th>Percentage of middle aged people n=40</th>
<th>Percentage of older people n=29</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth Group</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter/Christmas Events</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Visioning Days</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Groups</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund Raising</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Dinners</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making/Fixing Resources</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer Groups</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parish Council</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewardship</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Assistant</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. n=76 (7 older people did not answer this question)
Young people are mostly perceived by adults to participate in youth group and Christmas or Easter events. Table 12 indicates that there are areas of activity associated with the parish that are largely perceived to involve adults. According to young people, these areas include: parish dinners, making or fixing resources, prayer groups, parish council, stewardship and pastoral assistant (which includes visiting the sick). Around 25% of adult parish members perceived young people to participate in parish dinners and making or fixing resources where young people didn’t.

Current and Preferred Levels of Youth Participation

Survey respondents were asked to identify how often they thought that young people as a group participated in activities concerned with the operation of church services in the parish “on average”. Then they were asked how often they would like young people as a group to participate in activities concerned with the operation of church services in the parish. Figure 12 shows the number of respondents by age group who thought that young people participate or should participate frequently, occasionally or rarely. Respondents were asked to indicate levels of participation as weekly, fortnightly, monthly, occasionally or almost never. For analysis, responses were divided into: Frequently (weekly or fortnightly), Periodically (monthly) and Rarely (occasionally or almost never).
Survey respondents were next asked to identify how often they thought that young people as a group participated in activities concerned with the wider parish community “on average”. Then they were asked how often they would like young people as a group to participate in activities concerned with the wider parish community. Figure 13 shows the number of respondents by age group who thought that young people participate or should participate Frequently, Periodically or Rarely.
Most respondents perceived young people to participate in church services and the wider parish community periodically. With regard to preferred levels of youth participation, most respondents wanted young people to participate frequently in church services whereas most respondents wanted young people to participate in community activities periodically. However, it is also evident that many respondents would like youth participation in other activities to increase and become more frequent. Table 13 presents the percentage of each age group that perceived or wanted youth participation to occur at a particular level.
Table 13 reflects that with regard to current youth participation in church services, most young people were equally divided between whether it occurred frequently or periodically, with one young person indicating that they perceived youth participation in church services to occur rarely. Adult respondents perceived youth participation to be periodical overall. A similar pattern is evident with regard to preferred youth participation in church services, with young people being equally divided as to whether they preferred periodical or frequent participation, whereas adults preferred frequent participation overall. Table 13 also reflects that on the whole, adults

### Current and Preferred Levels of Youth Participation by Age group Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth participation</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage of young people</th>
<th>Percentage of middle aged people</th>
<th>Percentage of older people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of young people</td>
<td>Percentage of middle aged people</td>
<td>Percentage of older people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current youth</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participation in</td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>services</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>n=40</td>
<td>n=30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred youth</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participation in</td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>services</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=40</td>
<td>n=32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current youth</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participation in</td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other activities</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=7</td>
<td>n=40</td>
<td>n=25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred youth</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participation in</td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other activities</td>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>n=39</td>
<td>n=27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and youth respondents agree that youth currently participate in parish community activities periodically and that just over half of survey respondents prefer for youth participation in the parish community to remain periodical. Compared with young people and older people, middle aged people were slightly more likely to prefer that youth participation in the parish community became more frequent.

Concerns About Youth Participation Decreasing

Survey respondents were asked, “Would you feel uncomfortable with a decrease in youth participation in this parish? If they answered ‘yes’ to this question they were invited to answer the question, ‘What would be your concerns?’ Table 14 indicates the number of people who answered ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to this question according to age group membership, as well as the number of people who wrote what their concerns were.

Table 14.

Uncomfortable with a Decrease in Youth Participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>‘Yes’</th>
<th>‘No’</th>
<th>Concerns expressed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young people n=7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle aged people n=40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older people n=36</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is of interest that only 43% of young people indicated that they would not be concerned if youth participation in the parish decreased. This may suggest that youth
participation is not an issue that matters to all young people. It is reasonable to conclude that youth participation may well be largely an adult-owned issue given that 90% of middle aged people and 86% of older people indicated concern in this area.

The concerns expressed by respondents were entered into a database and were arranged thematically according to key words or topics. Table 15 presents an overview of nine identified reasons for concern about youth participation in the parish decreasing, including examples of the comments that were made. The themes have been arranged in order of the number of respondents who identified each concern, from the largest number who identified it to the smallest. The age group of respondents has also been indicated.
### Table 15.
Areas of Concern About Youth Participation Decreasing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF CONCERN</th>
<th>YOUNG PEOPLE</th>
<th>MIDDLE AGED PEOPLE</th>
<th>OLDER PEOPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demise of the Anglican church</td>
<td>Lack of faith amongst the younger generation.  n=1</td>
<td>Examples: Ageing church - no future; Eventual dying out of the parish; There would be an even greater lack of vibrancy; Without them the community is not viable; a decrease would be drastic!  n=12</td>
<td>Examples: The church would be in danger of stagnating without the lively curiosity and vigour of young people - and where would the church be when we oldies die out? n=10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth are part of our mission</td>
<td>n=20</td>
<td>Examples: A decrease would indicate care and support is not being provided by the parish; It is essential that young people are nurtured and can feel comfortable and supported on their spiritual journey. n=11</td>
<td>Examples: It would reflect a lack of concern or interest for the welfare of the young people of the parish; It would reflect an exclusive and unwelcoming attitude on our part; Youth need spiritual guidance. n=9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth are our future</td>
<td>Example: We must establish a healthy youth presence now in order to secure a future for the Anglican Church. n=1</td>
<td>Examples: Because young people are our future leaders; We need to continue beyond our present time. n=7</td>
<td>Examples: I feel that the parish needs youthful participation to keep the congregation flowing; The future of the church and parish is young people n=6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are a community of all ages</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>Examples: A community is all ages; each [age group] should have a strong sense of belonging and place; I believe that a thinking and inclusive parish should include all ages. n=10</td>
<td>Examples: So that we don't give the impression that church is only for older people; all ages should be represented; They should simply be part of the parish, not a separate group. n=3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of opportunity or involvement</td>
<td>n=10</td>
<td>Examples: Everyone has the right to be involved and included; If the decrease occurred due to a lack of opportunity I would be extremely concerned. n=7</td>
<td>However small the numbers youth inclusion must be encouraged; I would want a greater number to be engaged - a critical mass will encourage more to be involved. n=3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced visibility of youth</td>
<td>n=6</td>
<td>Examples: I like the youth services, especially the great music; to see less of them would make the parish see less of me. n=3</td>
<td>Examples: I would like to see them take more responsibility in all areas of church life; I would like to see young people and children reading lessons, serving, welcoming. n=3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 15 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA OF CONCERN</th>
<th>YOUNG PEOPLE</th>
<th>MIDDLE AGED PEOPLE</th>
<th>OLDER PEOPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of succession</td>
<td>We need to retain our depth of knowledge and pass it on.  n=1</td>
<td>Examples: Joining in any group helps younger people to learn about what goes on; That with so many elderly members, there is a definite need for younger generation to take over.  n=3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t meet youth needs</td>
<td>Youth needs unmet.  n=1</td>
<td>Example: They [YP] need their special interest(s) to be encouraged and supported.  n=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of relationship</td>
<td>Example: We would really miss anyone who left, or miss the opportunity to see each other and work together.  n=1</td>
<td>Loss of relationships (generational); loss of understanding of youth issues.  n=1</td>
<td>Increase in Generation Gap.  n=1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of adult survey respondents indicated that they would be concerned if youth participation in the parish decreased (n=67). Table 15 indicates that the three themes of concern for most respondents were: the demise of the Anglican Church, youth are part of our mission and we are a community of all ages. People who feared the demise of the Anglican Church seemed to be concerned that low numbers of youth membership today would result in low rates of church membership in the future. Some people in this category also feared that if youth are not present at church they would not learn how things are done or value the traditions. Survey respondents identified that youth are part of our mission as another area of high concern with regard to youth participation in the parish decreasing. These people tended to express that if youth left the church, the church or parish was failing them in some way. Thirdly, people were concerned that if youth left the church, the community would be deficient in some way, since they saw themselves as a community of all ages.

The statements made by parish members tended to indicate that youth are recognised as being important community members with needs and contributions to make, both currently and in the future. (Appendix 5 includes all respondent comments arranged thematically). A middle aged person who attended a focus group discussion on youth participation summarised,

Well I guess I’m just left with the thought that the more different ways and kinds that young people can participate and be involved the more protective it is for them and the parish because then they’ve got more links and the parish has more ways of knowing them and maybe there’s sort of a need for us to actively encourage and foster and support and
allow those relationships with each other and between generations, and we can practice at it.

Perceptions of Youth Capabilities

Adult voices

When invited, most adults who participated in focus groups were able to share stories about young people outside of the parish who had inspired them through their expression of strong faith or their ability to meet significant challenges showing courage and leadership. A middle aged person related,

...one stands out and that’s a girl called [name] who came to talk to the Christian Men’s Breakfast who was a little rich girl, went to the best school, did drugs, got really in trouble and eventually got out before the Beak [judge] who said ‘you either go to jail or you go the rehabilitation centre down in Esperance,’ ...and they just turned her life around and now she’s out there telling her story, firstly to schools to get the message over, ‘don’t do drugs’ and secondly to groups like ours, saying that with a Christian basis you can...change the lives of people...I was really inspired by that.

Another middle aged person related that,

She was a Young Australian of the Year earlier this year...But when you hear her speak and what she’s been through it’s absolutely amazing...only two survived from that water who were put into the water, and she was one...one of the two, but she had injuries that she makes light of and it was just amazing, and she’s only 23 now...it just show what you can do if you’ve got the will, but I don’t think I’ll complain about much again.

In a different, but related vein, a survey question asked, “Would you feel uncomfortable with an increase in youth participation in this parish?” If respondents answered ‘yes’ to this question they were invited to answer the question, ‘What would be your concerns?’ Seven adult survey respondents expressed concerns about youth participation in the parish increasing. Adult concerns included that it would be challenging, the quality of worship might
decrease and that youth may be too immature to participate. A full account of
respondent statements for this question is outlined in Appendix 6.

During interviews, some adults involved in parish ministries expressed
corns that youth were unreliable or immature. Expressed concerns about the
immaturity of young people contrast with the stories depicting youth strengths
and their ability to inspire others, which a number of adults shared in focus
groups. Although the adults raising these kinds of concerns were in the minority
compared with adults who would not be concerned if youth participation
increased, adults engaged in significant service and ministry to the parish made
them. These adults take pride in the service that they offer to the parish and their
roles often accord them significant status and involvement within the parish
community. Having young people becoming involved in their area of ministry
may be perceived as lowering standards or lessening the value of their own
involvement.

One older person said,

One reason why I volunteered to be a server was because the young ones
kept forgetting their rosters and they’d have no one there…you’d call a
meeting on the Saturday, all the old ones would turn up but the young
ones wouldn’t, so it was only a liability where the young ones fell
through…because the young ones were unreliable at reading rosters…so I
think there has to be reliability on the part of young ones if they are
involved in things.

An older person responded to this kind of sentiment by saying “Or is it a matter
of different structures? Because young people have always been like
that…somebody has to sort of help them remember the roster.” Important
considerations regarding joint adult and youth activities would also include their
timing and appropriate supports to young people.
Occasionally adults expressed concerns that young people lacked maturity. An older person reported that, “…They just thought they didn’t have the maturity and they couldn’t give the elements [communion] to adults with any understanding…” Another older person expressed their concerns about young people being involved in a prayer ministry. “…you’ve got to think about this confidentiality area because you can’t have them chit chatting you know about somebody else’s problems…People who understand prayer and the strength of prayer [are needed] and whether people of that age really grasp that, I don’t know.”

Youth increasing their participation the parish was raised within focus groups and a range of adult opinions were expressed ranging from limited participation to global encouragement of youth involvement. One older person suggested, “…developing [the] skill area of leadership and responsibility, we could more than likely select a few of those things and give them some responsibility which wouldn’t come in conflict with other people, in other words [other] age groups.” This view seems to suggest that youth could be given areas of participation, but separate to adults. Another older person responded, “But I just think I wouldn’t mind what participation there is with youth as long as they want to do it and they do it all reverently…” This older person seems to be suggesting that youth can do anything, as long as they do it in a way that doesn’t detract from the quality of adult worship. In a separate conversation, a middle aged person commented that youth “…are entitled to the same rights as everybody else, so if they’ve got an idea, a desire or enthusiasm about something, they should be allowed to do it and they should be encouraged…”
This adult appears to be supporting a view of parish community life that seeks to support the initiative of anyone in the community, whatever their age.

Youth voices

A couple of young people involved in regular church service activities expressed that it was important to them to have their contributions acknowledged. A young person who had been a parish member for some time commented, “I think a lot of them still think of me as the little girl that was always in Sunday school rather than…as a teenager and a grown up.” This young person expressed a desire for more acknowledgement of their contribution, including their ability to contribute to church services and the parish community. Another young person said, “I felt more intimate, like involved in the church…they go up to you and say that I’m doing a good job and stuff like that.”

Not all young people want to participate in the parish community in a significant way, however. One young person who very occasionally attended church services said, “I don’t really have much to put in, not to be rude, but I guess I haven’t been going to church for a long time…”

Others expressed interest in participating in the parish occasionally or in the broader community, separate from church services. A young person who attended church services occasionally said,

It’s hard to get a sense of community, no matter where you live, and so that’s what I look for in participation… not necessarily participation as in I go every week or I go to this event or that event, I just, there’s a sense of belonging I guess.

Another young person who attended church very occasionally but who supported some parish events expressed the following preference.
Probably something really casual. I know that there was going to be a lunch set up where they just met for a lunch a few times a month and just talked about anything really; nothing in particular; but more of a group where they just happened to go to church and you could speak about those things as well, but you didn’t have to – just be as friends or something like that…you can share or you can just listen…

Although parish involvement or attending church services will not appeal to all young people, a desire to share their gifts, develop friendships or experience a sense of community may be an important feature of their involvement in the parish community. This finding adds information to those presented in the mentoring section of this chapter regarding important areas of ministry to young people. Seven young people completed the survey and they were likely to be young people who attended church regularly. The additional comments of young people who are connected to the parish but who do not regularly participate in church services provides a broader view about what may be important to parish young people.

Perceptions about Change in the Parish

Change and how it is approached emerged as a cultural-institutional concern within this study. Reference to change occurring slowly over time, little by little and preferring the status quo and older values emerged as a theme. An older person said, “I think my age group likes things to go on the same old way and we’re happy with that. We’re not saying we don’t want them [youth] or anything like that, we’re just happy for the status quo.” Another older person said, “It’s almost as if they feel threatened, and that’s why so many adults don’t like to cede power to the younger generation, because they feel that they’re giving up so much.” Another older person cautioned that, “You just have to be careful not to push too much too quickly” whilst another said, “I am delighted
that things are moving a bit, because we seem to have stagnated over the years.”

Two older people in conversation said,

(Person 1)...change is something that everyone is a bit hairy about...for many of them, they haven’t had the experience of the richness that this kind of process offers, and it’s threatening in a way (Person 2)...like the people who said before decimalisation, 'wait until I’m dead and then you can do it!

Young people also commented on change in the parish and expressed their desire to change the way things were done rather than beliefs or traditions. A young person said, “If we don’t change it and we just have old people left we’ll die out because no one will want to join up again.” Another young person said,

I’m all for keeping all the old traditions, but it’s about changing it to suit what today’s society needs and to keep them [young people] interested, otherwise all you’ll have is old people going to church, which is a common thing.

Another young person said,

It doesn’t mean changing their beliefs, it just means looking at what’s needed not and accepting that in trying to support youth, because I mean, what the church is now isn’t what the church used to be so why have the same attitudes before and hold them now?”

A young person commented, “It’s necessary to change with the times...you can keep it the exact same way it was before, but sometimes change is necessary.”

Barriers to Youth Participation

A number of people who participated in interviews or focus groups related stories of adult involvement or interventions that had negatively affected youth participation in parish events or activities. An older person explained how the youth group that they were running with another parish adult had been shut down.
“We had kids that were older, 18-20s on motorbikes with girlfriends on the back…the language was unreal…the people in the parish and the people living around the church complained because when they’d go home at night time they’d all hop on their bikes and do a round of the block…so the vestry met and said I had to disband it and I reckon that was the worst thing they ever did, because they [the young people] felt so betrayed.”

A young person involved in a parish ministry explained the difficulty that they experienced when they needed to put a notice in the parish bulletin.

I just wanted to speak with [name of a parish warden] because I’d been trying to phone the church office for about a week and hadn’t had anyone answer the phone, so this was a last resort…and [name of a parish warden] came and said ‘just tell [her/him s/he] needs to phone the church office because I can’t do anything’…it made me lose trust in the wardens, only because if you can’t phone up about a simple thing like getting something put into the pew sheet…how do you go about approaching them with something bigger?

This young person reported experiencing significant problems with the parish task that they were responsible for and having difficulty with getting appropriate support from the parish adults that they approached for help.

A related issue emerged about the availability of parish resources to young people. A middle aged person related his/her experience of being a young person involved in parish activities.

We were here all the time and we used to help out with the busy bees and do cooking and run the dinners and things and then one year I asked if I could borrow the bain-marie. ‘Oh no, you know, you’re not allowed to, we can check with the Mother’s Union, but you wouldn’t be allowed to take it out of the church hall’…So what you’re really saying is, this is my list of contributions but you don’t trust me!

An older person related an issue around the use of the parish hall.

But there’s such an influence from the old people in the church, when we built the hall, the hall was for youth and we had a basketball court there, but ‘oh no, you can’t play basketball in there, you’ll mark the floor!’

Within the parish bulletins analysed as part of this study a notice about Children and Youth Recreation Areas was made (19/2/06) which stated that, “A group has been put together from various members of the parish community to investigate
how we can better meet the needs of all the kids of various ages who use the hall.” The group that was formed to discuss hall usage included two older people and two middle aged people, but no young people. A lack of youth representation on this kind of group implies that adults consider that they can cater for youth needs without consulting with them.

Music as a Site of Youth Participation in the Parish

Music emerged as an area where youth participation was already very strong, with young people leading the music during the 9:30am church service on 2nd and 5th Sundays of the month during 2006. Young people expressed how important their music was for them.

…not only does [music] give me a sense of participation, it makes the service more exciting…it breaks the tedium…it’s no accident that some of the most successful youth groups have great music teams because that’s what lifts it up for a lot of people our age. It’s just something that adds to the experience.

Another young person says,

The music…I feel that music’s like really something that, what the song’s about is you want to get closer to God and like um I feel that if I wasn’t playing with the band, if I still heard the songs they’d still make me want to be closer to God.

A middle aged adult commented that, “It happens to be the way that youth are coming into participation. They’re coming through music mainly.”

The youth music group experienced difficulty when some adults in the parish objected to their music. One young person said,

There was a bit of controversy about some of our music and the theological kind of background to it that some people in the parish didn’t like…I was a bit put-off when it got personal…it was new for us and we were trying something new and I’d never played in a band before so it was all kind of a let-down to be put down a bit and shut down, it was a bit off-putting and hurtful.
Another young person said, “You know on Sundays, you’ll see like half the crowd will be like ‘yeah this is really good’, like even elderly people and stuff…and then there’s the other people who are just giving you filthy looks…”

Adults varied in their opinions on the young people’s music group. An older person said, “I just hope if you are trying to introduce the youth into being more involved and having all of this music, I just hope we never lose the quarter-to-eight service where we’ve still got the traditional service…is the singing becoming the focus of it and not the prayer in a service?” Another older person said,

I’d like to say that [the CYMC] and their little music group, with every single service that we’ve had…it gets better and better and better, but I’d hate to see four Sundays of it because if people are practicing the love of the Gospel, you’re going to have to love everyone, both the oldies and the young ones, then we’ve got to have both.

Another older person said, “…in the youth music service today, I mean there were moments when it was light but there were also moments of enormous depth, and that came as much from the musicians…and the words that they offer us…” A middle aged adult commented,

I think it’s fantastic when [name of the CYMC] does their band and I know so many people have said to me, ‘oh, it’s fantastic’ and, you know, ‘we should have more of this’ and when that’s on the youth should actually be doing more of the service…

Based on respondent comments, young people received a lot of mixed messages from parish adults about the value and contribution that their music made to Sunday Services.

Youth Preferences

Some of the young people involved in this study identified a preference for one-off activities, variety and having fun. A young person stated,
…it’s like changing it up, not having the same constant thing happening every single time because it makes it more interesting and makes you want to come back if there’s something there that you know is going to be different…

Other young people talked about having fun events as an important focus. “Fun ones where there’s like...when you put in some hard work and people have fun because of that work, and you can also have fun because of it.” Another young person expressed,

…yeah, just like one-off things I find really [fun] because they’re something that you look forward to and something that you have fond memories of, not necessarily the on-going stuff...

For other young people fundraising and involvement in children’s ministry or youth group leadership were activities that interested them. One young person said, “I would like to help out more with…organising fund-raisers, because it’s what I like doing.” Another young person suggested, “We could do some fund raisers which would also help with connecting with other people…” A couple of young people expressed an interest with helping out with children and youth activities. “I would also like to help out with youth group and [Sunday School], like teaching the young-uns, the real young-uns.”

Young people identified that they needed access to resources and support. One young person said they wanted to “Raise some money so then we can afford new stuff. That would help a lot…some stuff that you can just play games with…more dodge-balls.” Another young person said,

I think when a young person comes in and they’re trying, at least support them. I mean there’s a lot of young people who come to the church who don’t participate…I think they’ve got to be thankful if they’ve got youth in the church. Be thankful and just try and keep them there. Put resources in place.
Summary of the Youth Participation Findings

Findings presented in this section of the chapter suggest that youth have quite a limited repertoire of roles in both church services and in the parish community, compared with adults. Adult respondents were quite aware of the areas that youth contributed in, although they were a little less aware in the areas of youth serving and helping with the collection during church services. Most survey respondents thought that youth should be more involved in church services, but opinions were divided regarding increasing the frequency of youth participation in the parish community.

Most adult respondents were concerned about youth participation decreasing with the main reasons cited including the demise of the Anglican Church and failure to provide appropriate ministry to young people. Many respondents also valued a community comprised of all age groups. Conversely, a small group of respondents were uncomfortable about youth participation increasing due to concerns about youth immaturity or unreliability and the possibility that the quality of church services might decrease. Attitudes to change in the parish were also fairly conservative, especially among older study participants.

Barriers to youth participation were identified with regard to adults making decisions about what youth activities and resources were made available to young people as well as their availability to support young people with parish responsibilities. Adult attitudes to youth participation in the area of music were demonstrated to be varied, but with negative attitudes impacting on youth confidence. Despite these difficulties, young people expressed interest in
participating in more one-off events, fun activities, fundraising for the parish and themselves and being involved in children’s and youth ministries.

Youth participation appears to be largely an adult identified issue with only a small handful of young people involved in this study expressing concern about youth participation in the parish decreasing. For those young people who do choose to get involved in parish activities or ministries, adult support and resources would appear to be very important in sustaining them. Whilst some adult study participants expressed concern about youth being too immature or unreliable to adequately take on significant ministries, others were saying that youth needed to be given more input into church services, or any areas that interest them.

Youth involved in this study that were connected to the parish through community activities and events more than through church services, identified opportunities for friendship and a sense of community belonging as being important to them. These young people are likely to access a more limited range of parish activities than their church-attending peers, but still have the same need to develop a sense of parish belonging. Adults may find that they have fewer opportunities to connect with these young people and that it takes more effort to get to know them, or to find topics of mutual interest.

Conclusion to the Chapter

This study found that many respondents feel positive about mentoring as an approach to youth ministry. However, it also became apparent that established ways of conducting parish youth ministries do not generally lend themselves to promoting positive adult-youth parish relationships outside of
those who are identified as ‘youth leaders’. In the area of youth participation, most youth activities or roles are quite distinct from those of adults and so it seems that opportunities for adults and youth to interact socially or through parish ministries are very limited. Mentoring as an approach was largely perceived to emphasise the development of positive adult-youth relationships and therefore does have the potential to address some of the issues identified in the parish context. However, the previous experience with the Buddy Programme with its lack of focus and programme supports and the identified parish barriers to youth participation would need to be addressed to promote successful programme implementation.

Although youth participation appears to be largely an adult issue, youth involved in this study identified a variety of preferences that they considered would promote their participation in the parish. It has been noted that youth needs may differ depending on their engagement (or not) in worship-related activities, but youth needs for variety (including one-off events), friendship opportunities or a sense of community belonging appear to be applicable to all parish-connected young people. Those young people who participate in the worshipping events of the parish expressed a need to be able to question their faith, to experience their faith through relationship with others and to express their faith through music. Adult responses and attitudes appeared to have an impact upon how welcome and valued the young people who participated in this study felt within the parish.

Overall, the majority of adults involved in the current study were very concerned about the demise of the Anglican Church and their parish if young peoples’ participation decreased. Youth and adult study participants were in
agreement that youth involvement does mean change, but not necessarily to the underlying traditions and values. According to young people, change would involve reviewing how things are done in the parish if continued youth involvement were the goal.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

This study uses as its reference point a parish-identified vision for its ministry to parish young people:

The parish desires to integrate its Children and Youth Ministry with the faith (worshipping) community. It seeks to make its Ministry sustainable within the parish and it seeks to develop meaningful relationships between younger and older people. (Visioning Days Summary, CYMC, 2006).

The research approach adopted in this study included the illuminative evaluation method of comparing parish-based statements and documents with interpersonal behaviours and customs that were identified within the study. The purposes of this study also included consulting both young people and adults about their perceptions, expectations and experiences concerning youth mentoring and youth participation in the parish. This was done with a view to identifying pre-programme and programme activities that both young people and adults could engage in that would: (a) promote more effective adult-youth relationships; and (b) respond to identified needs.

The study was grounded in a research approach foregrounding context as an important influence on both the relevance and effectiveness of formal programmes implemented to facilitate particular purposes or outcomes. The findings of the current study suggest that although a youth mentoring programme initially presented as a promising intervention for the parish, it would be less likely to work effectively given the preferences of youth study participants and parish customs regarding youth-adult activities and patterns of relating.
Based on the findings of this study it is apparent that for the majority of adult study respondents, a decrease in youth participation would be of real concern. For many, this decrease holds significant implications for the future of the Anglican Church and the parish itself. For others, the idea of belonging to a community incorporating all age groups presented as being important. For example, one middle aged survey respondent said, “to see less of them [youth] would make the parish see less of me.” Therefore, it is now the task of this study to: (a) identify a number of pre-programme activities that the parish could engage in that would enhance the likelihood of a programme intervention assisting with the development of effective adult-youth relationships in the parish; and (b) recommend a programme intervention to the parish that takes account of its vision for its ministry to young people and the identified needs of adult and youth study participants.

This chapter will begin with recommendations to the parish regarding pre-programme activities that would support the development of effective adult-youth relationships. This will be followed by a recommendation regarding the kind of formal adult-youth programme that presents as being most suited to the parish context. The chapter will then discuss study limitations, implications for the mentoring and youth-adult relationship fields and implications for future research.
Organisational and Pre-Programme Activities Likely to Support Programme Implementation

The current study includes consideration of pre-programme implementation interventions that could be put in place to maximise the likelihood of the proposed adult-youth programme’s effectiveness.

Barbara Rogoff’s sociocultural approach to human development is one that foregrounds individual development, but it also attends to change in communities as a result of the involvement of people from successive generations (Rogoff, 2003). Although Rogoff’s work has focused on the development of individuals within different cultural contexts, flexibility is apparent given that it is the researcher that foregrounds a particular plane of human activity (personal, interpersonal or cultural-institutional) according to what frame is more important to him or her. Rogoff’s work attends to what people do together in sociocultural activities and although her focus tends to be on the implications for individual development, it does not preclude a different focus.

Rogoff’s theoretical approach assists with an analysis of the parish context because it supports a focus on interpersonal relationships between adults and youth. When this focus is informed by findings regarding individual perspectives and expectations and the cultural aspects and impacts of parish life, there is the potential to achieve a richer understanding of how adult-youth relationships are shaped, or might be shaped differently, within this particular context. There is also the potential to consider how developments in adult-youth relationships might impact on the nature of institutional or community change.
and development, particularly through the development of a formal parish programme.

On that basis I consider some of the pre-programme activities or processes that the parish might usefully engage with to prepare the culture of the parish toward the successful implementation of a formal adult-youth programme. This discussion will focus on the intersection between adult-youth issues identified by study participants and related organisational and pre-programme activities that support effective adult-youth relationships identified in the literature (Table 2, p. 46, Literature Review). Table 16 is not a comprehensive action plan for developing and implementing an effective adult-youth programme. Rather, organisational and pre-programme activities from Table 2 have been compared with study findings in order to identify priorities for the parish to address prior to programme design and implementation.
Table 16.

Organisational and Pre-Programme Activities Likely to Support Programme Design and Implementation in the Parish Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LITERATURE IDENTIFIED ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>STUDY IDENTIFIED ISSUES</th>
<th>RECOMMENDATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provide initial training for adults/young people.</td>
<td>• Communication difficulties and lack of opportunities for communication between youth and adults, especially older adults.</td>
<td>Address barriers to communication between youth and adults.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• The need for an adult relay to keep youth informed or to advocate for them.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Affirmatively address issues of power</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide sufficient resources for the programme to achieve its aims</td>
<td>• Parish youth not consulted about decisions that affect them.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The attitudes of some adults presents a barrier to youth participation in the parish.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Young people identified that they needed more resources.</td>
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<td>• Youth participating in parish ministries identified the need for adult support.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish a culture of continual organisational and personal change (risk taking, idea-sharing and theories and stories of change)</td>
<td>• Resistance to change or a preference for the status quo was identified by some adult study participants.</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Create participation pathways for young people and institutionalise new organisational roles for youth</td>
<td>• Not all youth connect into the parish through worship activities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Introduce mechanisms for the support and involvement of parents and develop supportive community networks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LITERATURE IDENTIFIED ACTIVITIES</td>
<td>STUDY IDENTIFIED ISSUES</td>
<td>RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop a clear shared vision about young people</td>
<td>• Lack of youth participation in the parish is an adult-identified issue</td>
<td>Develop a shared vision for youth participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mobilise and coordinate a group of diverse stakeholders</td>
<td>• The parish vision for its youth ministry had limited parish input and scope</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Satisfy local needs</td>
<td>• Young people wanted to feel a sense of community belonging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop clear expectations of adults regarding their relationships with young people</td>
<td>• Parish adults were varied in their responses to young people</td>
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</table>

As evident from the comparison of literature and study findings in Table 16, my recommendation is that the parish addresses the following four pre-programme areas before implementing a formal parish programme aimed at improving adult-youth relationships: (1) address barriers to communication between youth and adults; (2) be aware of power differences between adults and youth; (3) be open to supporting youth-initiated change; and (4) develop a shared vision for youth participation in the parish. The four identified pre-programme areas needing to be addressed will now be discussed in more detail. Each subsection will conclude with a figure developed from analysis based on Rogoff’s conceptualisation of development. The resulting analysis identifies the supports that organisational (cultural institutional) and individual activities can provide to promote effective relationships between youth and adults in the parish.
Communication difficulties and a lack of opportunities for communication between parish adults and young people have been identified as issues within the current study. Addressing barriers to communication between youth and adults is therefore an important pre-programme activity. Developing the communication skills of adults and/or young people is likely to be a component of the training provided in the lead-up to many adult-youth programmes. Given that the intended parish programme targets adult-youth relationships, it would be optimal for parish adults and young people to engage in communication training together leading up to programme development and implementation.

Although a couple of young people reported feeling very comfortable talking with parish adults, others indicated feeling unwelcome and unconnected to the parish, beyond their youth activities. Some adults who participated in the study identified that communication with parish young people was an issue for them, with difficulty understanding where young people were coming from and youth speech conventions being cited as examples. Challenges cited by youth included finding a suitable topic of conversation or getting beyond topics such as school.

Adults who are willing to listen to young people and share with them in authentic ways promote relationship development (O’Donoghue & Strobel, 2007; Spencer, 2006). These categories are particularly relevant to the issue of adult-youth communication in the parish and are themes that are reflected within the story of one youth study participant when describing an adult from outside of the parish who had inspired her.
My story is a bit different I guess…I’ve been going through a difficult time lately. You could say I have a broken heart and earlier this year this lady I’ve known for a while but I don’t know that well; when I told my story, instead of saying ‘oh, you’ll be o.k.’, she actually, she told me her story, and she looked into my eyes with real understanding and told me her story, which is, you know, just as heartbreaking, maybe even more so, but she shared that with me and she didn’t trivialise what I was going through…

Listening and sharing are communication skills that many parish members (youth and adults alike) may appreciate the opportunity to develop or practice with each other. A parish-based workshop in this area could provide adults and youth an opportunity to communicate and get to know one another better in a supportive and guided forum and could be regarded as a pre-programme training activity.

The Results Chapter of this study includes two examples of ways that communication processes between adults and youth were not established in the parish. A parish workgroup set up to consider the usage of the hall by children and youth in the parish did not include any young people. It was not clear whether the workgroup consulted with or informed young people of its decisions or recommendations. A young person in the study commented that when the CYMC left the parish, no adult(s) performed the function of ‘relay’, i.e., feeding information from parish adults back to young people.

Roger Hart (1992) provides the Ladder of Participation typology as a way of assessing or promoting the level of youth participation in a project activity. This provides a basic means of assessing where young people stand in relation to adults in the area of project development. The possibility of young people not participating does not appear on Hart’s ladder, since his non-participative levels include engaging young people in a project that they do not understand or engaging them in ways that do not lead to meaningful participation. A ladder
rung that reflects issues or projects concerning young people but where young people are not engaged is required as another example of non-participation.

Hart’s typology would be a useful reference-point for parish adults in deciding in what way it would be optimal for them to engage with young people when they are considering parish issues or projects that concern them. An overall community goal of engaging with a particular kind of youth involvement, consultation and information would imply the kinds of communication channels required to achieve it. For example, a decision to aim for rung 5 of the ladder (youth are consulted and informed) would require formalised processes of consultation and information-sharing between adults and youth in the parish. This would involve identifying the circumstances requiring youth consultation and information, the people involved (both youth and adults) and the supports required to enable ‘relays’ to fulfil their roles effectively.

**Figure 14.** Individual, interpersonal and organisational aspects of communication.
Be Aware of Power Differences between Adults and Youth

There is a relationship between the areas of opening up communication between adults and young people in the parish and engaging with power differences between them. Consultation with young people and informing young people of parish events or decisions that affect them would give them more opportunities to have an influence on parish decision-making. Young people would also have more of an opportunity to participate in parish processes if they understood what they were and who was involved in them. This kind of understanding could also enhance youth access to appropriate resources and supports in relation to their activities in the parish.

The influence of adult power in the area of youth participation became particularly apparent through study respondent comments about perceived barriers to youth participation in the parish. Three study-identified areas where adults were cited to have an adverse influence on youth participation were: (a) having the power to reduce or close down youth activities; (b) being in a position to prevent youth access to parish resources; and (c) having knowledge about parish processes and not sharing that knowledge with young people. Although parish adults do not all have access to power, knowledge or decision-making processes in the parish, young people as a group almost certainly do not.

When the situation of young people in the parish is considered alongside Zimmerman’s (2000) comparison of empowering processes and empowered outcomes some potential strategies for further engaging parish young people are identified. Zimmerman’s outline indicates that if young people were given the opportunity to develop decision-making, resource management and working with others skills, this would contribute to a sense of control and the development of
participatory behaviours. At the organisational level, opportunities to participate in decision-making, shared leadership and shared responsibilities would contribute to youth establishing effective competition for resources and policy influence. For example, facilitating youth empowerment within the parish could include allocating young people a portion of the parish budget and giving them some control over how it was spent. Overall, any programme implemented by the parish would need to ensure that it had sufficient resources allocated to it to achieve its aims.

The kinds of opportunities and supports that are facilitated for young people are again related to the kind of youth participation that the parish as a whole seeks to facilitate. For example, if rung 5 of Hart’s Ladder of Participation were adopted as a parish goal, then young people would be consulted and informed about parish decisions that impact on them. Some sharing of power between adults and young people would be required to allow youth preferences to have an impact on parish decisions, policies and programmes. Sharing power was identified as an area of challenge for adults when engaging with young people. Camino (2005) reflected that the amount of youth-adult collaboration possible is dependent on how much space adults are willing to open up for young people. However, Camino differentiated between opening up space and getting out of the way and pointed out that adults have an important influence on both youth learning and group effectiveness.

Adult attitudes can also have a disempowering effect on young people. A study-identified area where adults could potentially affect youth participation involved negative adult participant perceptions of youth capabilities and concerns about youth participation in the parish increasing. For example, youth
study participants who were involved in playing music during some church
services reported feeling hurt and discouraged by the negative feedback that they
received from some parish adults about their music. Some adults perceived
youth to be immature or unreliable and others expressed concerns that their
increased participation in church services could reduce the quality of worship.
Although these concerns were only raised by a small group of parish adults, they
tended to be made by adults with defined roles or ministries in the parish. Young
people seeking to increase their participation in parish roles or ministries would
likely come into more contact with adults with these attitudes.

Adult responses to young people that facilitate adult-youth relationships
were identified within the Literature Review chapter of this study. Adults who
were willing to view themselves as co-learners and collaborators with young
people and who expected young people to extend themselves whilst providing
support were considered more likely to develop effective relationships with
them.

The Intergenerational Contact Model (Fox & Giles, 1993) considers
group contacts between young people and older people that are likely to alter
age-related attitudes. The model takes account of a range of individual,
interpersonal and contact situation factors that contribute toward the
development of positive images of the other age group. Beyond factors such as
goals and expectations, social factors such as having equal status and the contact
occurring in neutral territory (i.e., territory not considered to belong to young
people or adults) are thought to influence the perceptions of both age groups,
contributing to the overall quality of the intergenerational contact.
The parish is able to offer a number of neutral places where young people and adults could interact together. Careful planning of intergenerational contact situations would take into account how they were advertised, who organised them and how people were treated in the contact situation to promote a sense of equality, influence and value to both age groups. Attending to the context of the interaction would assist both groups in seeing beyond any limited age-related attitudes and expectations.

Overall, I have argued that parish adults need to be particularly aware of power differences between themselves and young people. All adults interacting with young people need to be aware that their comments and behaviours can have an empowering or disempowering effect on the participation of young people in the parish. Careful planning of inter-age contacts can contribute to the development of positive age-related perceptions and experiences.

Figure 15. Individual, interpersonal and organisational aspects of power.
Be Willing to Support Youth-Initiated Change

Issues to do with change in the parish emerged within the study findings. The age-related demographics of study respondents reflect that the parish has a fairly large proportion of older members within it (43% of survey respondents were aged 66 years or over). Comments made by older parish members indicated that for some, change is threatening and something to be avoided. One older study participant commented that their older aged peers did not see the potential that different processes might offer to the parish and another pointed out that it is not that young people are unwelcome, it’s just that the status quo is preferred.

By contrast, youth respondents discussed the need for change if youth are to be attracted to the parish or engaged in its activities. Youth study participants suggested that change might be necessary to ensure the future of the parish.

Barbara Rogoff (2003) asserts that cultural practices, although they persist, also change over time. Rogoff implies that it is adaptive for communities to recognise that there are numerous ways for their members to arrange themselves and that change over time is part of “a process of cultural development over generations” (Rogoff, 2003, p. 355).

Table 16 indicates that an important organisational or cultural activity to promote effective adult-youth relationships involves establishing a culture of continual organisational and personal change (risk taking, idea-sharing and theories and stories of change). This involves continually adapting to the needs of the young people involved. An important by-product of effective
communication and consultation between adults and youth would be the identification of youth preferences and needs. Similarly, I argued earlier that if young people were involved in some of the decision-making processes of the parish it would be easier for them to access resources and influence policy.

Given that most adult survey respondents indicated that they would be concerned if youth participation in the parish decreased, it should be possible to mobilise some parish adults around the issue of youth engagement in the parish. However, it is not envisaged that young people becoming more involved in parish decision-making processes or initiating new projects is something that all parish adults would welcome. Survey responses and comments made during interviews and focus groups indicate that some adults held concerns about the ability of young people to contribute responsibly and that the quality of worship (for example) might decrease. Even if adults were not apprehensive about youth involvement increasing, the process of including young people and adjusting processes to facilitate their meaningful participation would involve change and challenge for those involved. Therefore, those adults that did volunteer to be involved in encouraging youth-initiated change would need parish support for their role.

The literature suggests that adults need support when they are supporting and guiding young people and that this can be critical to programme success (Mitra, 2005). Parish adults who agreed to actively support youth-initiated change would have to adopt a range of roles, including being prepared to advocate for youth needs in the parish. It cannot be assumed that those adults would have other ministry or decision-making roles in the parish and therefore they themselves may need support and guidance with navigating parish processes.
such as obtaining resources or influencing policy and procedures. It would make sense for those adults to be linked to other adults in the parish who could mentor them and support them in their role as youth advocates. Recognition that involvement with young people was itself a parish ministry and valuing of that role would also assist the adults involved with being more effective in supporting young people. Those in positions of leadership in the parish could play an important role in this regard. Table 16 indicates that introducing mechanisms for the support and involvement of parents and developing supportive community networks are important pre-programme activities that assist with the development of effective youth-adult relationships. It should not be overlooked that parents are an important source of support and information for adults involved in supporting youth-initiated change in the parish. When parents are informed and befriended, they can effectively support programme initiatives.

Table 16 also identifies the importance of creating participation pathways for young people and institutionalising new organisational roles for youth. Increased communication and consultation between parish adults and young people and attention to youth needs would make it easier to identify aspects of the parish organisation that young people would like to be more involved in. For instance, this study has identified that a number of young people are interested in the area of fund-raising. A parish fund-raising committee could be set up including defined youth membership and youth roles. Youth could have input into the setting up of this committee so that its purposes and operating procedures were appealing to themselves as well as to interested adults.

The experience of conducting this research study in the parish brought me into contact with a range of adults and the skills and learning experiences that
they have to offer to young people in particular is impressive. Adult parish members have the capacity to offer young people a range of opportunities to develop new skills and to learn from working alongside them in a supportive environment (Messias et al., 2005). Giving young people some autonomy (Larson, 2005) and allowing them to make mistakes (Messias et al., 2005) also promotes a sense of ownership in young people. A useful starting-point would be to respond to some of the youth interests and youth needs identified in this study and to support those young people who show an interest in being part of parish activities and functions, even if the process of doing so involves risk and change.

Middle aged parish members may be particularly willing to assist young people in the area of support, skills development and learning. Most middle aged survey respondents (75%) viewed youth access to resources and support and as being of high importance within a parish ministry to young people. In addition, a number of survey respondents (up to 18) identified that both young people and older people could benefit from mentoring-like relationships in the area of learning and challenge.
Table 16 indicates that developing a clear, shared vision about young people is a useful pre-programme activity that supports the development of effective adult-youth relationships. This study began with a parish vision statement for its ministry to young people, but this vision statement was not adopted broadly within the parish and therefore, it was not a shared vision. The vision statement was developed during a parish-visioning day held during 2006. Of those that attended the visioning day, a small group gathered to discuss a vision for children and youth ministry in the parish and this group developed the vision statement.

As outlined in the Results Chapter of this study, it is customary for youth ministry to be led by one or two youth leaders, and other parish adults do not generally get involved with parish youth. Therefore, the CYMC used the vision statement in documents that s/he produced, but it was not utilised outside of
his/her ministry brief. Overall, the vision statement for children and youth ministry may have provided some direction for the CYMC and it may have communicated to some parish groups the intentions behind their ministry, but it was not a shared parish vision. To become a shared parish vision it would have needed to be broadly disseminated and discussed amongst a wide range of parish stakeholders before its approval and adoption. The discussion that has occurred within this chapter so far has emphasised the importance of youth ministry changes occurring at the organisational, interpersonal and individual levels to promote the effectiveness of a parish adult-youth programme. A shared vision for youth participation in the parish would need to be a statement to which many parish members could subscribe and then it could serve to guide parish efforts and behaviours towards a common goal. This study has contributed to consultation with diverse parish stakeholders (including young people) and the identification of some local needs regarding youth-adult relationships in the parish. This is regarded as the first step in developing a parish-based programme that is relevant to a range of young people and adults.

The identification of youth and adult needs around youth participation in the parish is a good starting point for developing a shared vision for youth participation in the parish. This study has generated findings that allow some parish adult and youth needs to be identified. Davidson (2005, p.33) defines a need as “…something without which unsatisfactory functioning occurs.” A need can be distinguished from a want since although going without a want may lead to dissatisfaction, unsatisfactory functioning does not occur (Davidson, 2005).

Within this study, most young people did not identify that a decrease in youth participation in the parish would be of great concern to them. Some youth
study participants preferred variety, one-off events, fun activities and social opportunities (among other things). Without these opportunities young people may choose to cease participating in the parish and seek these kinds of opportunities elsewhere. One youth study participant indicated that occasional participation in the parish contributed to a sense of community belonging for him/her and that this was difficult to find elsewhere. Young people do not necessarily need to participate in the parish but they do need to experience a sense of community belonging somewhere. In addition, a youth study participant who was performing a ministry within the parish did identify his/her need for adult support and resources and found that without them s/he was unable to fulfil her/his ministry role satisfactorily. O’Donoghue and Strobel (2007) found that adults who showed caring and extended support to young people facilitated youth involvement in a range of service activities.

A notable difference between the parish vision for its children and youth ministry and this study’s findings is that the parish vision sought to “integrate its Children and Youth Ministry with the faith (worshipping) community” whereas study findings have indicated that some young people do not choose to participate in the parish primarily through worship activities. However, some of these young people were contributing to ministry activities or parish events. Young people who participated in this study expressed a need for a sense of welcome and belonging in the parish. If the parish were to develop a vision for its youth ministry that focused on the worshipping community alone, it would not fully engage with all young people connected to its community. This would run the risk of not attending to the interests and needs of all youth connected to and supportive of the parish.
This study has identified that for many adult participants, youth participation in the parish is a need. With regard to a decrease in youth participation, study findings reflected that unsatisfactory functioning would occur in terms of the future viability of the parish and the Anglican Church and in terms of the parish not comprising a community of all ages.

A number of adult survey respondents (n=20) indicated their concern that a decrease in youth participation in the parish would indicate their inability to fulfil their mission to young people. Comments included that a decrease in youth participation would reflect a lack of care, concern or interest on their part, including failure to provide for the spiritual needs of young people. A parish vision for its ministry to young people could incorporate some clear expectations of adults regarding their relationships with young people. These could serve to shape and encourage optimal interactions with young people most likely to encourage and sustain their participation in the parish. Expectations could be based on some of the adult attitudes and behaviours that support effective adult-youth relationships identified within this chapter and within the Literature Review chapter of this study. In addition, the parish vision could include a commitment to sustaining youth ministry activities and programmes regardless of changes in parish staff.

Overall therefore, youth participation in the parish is an adult-identified issue and it is in the interests of adults to develop and enact a shared vision for youth participation in the parish. Overall, the more parish adults who contribute to the development and adoption of a shared vision for its ministry to young people, the more likely that it will be enacted and achieved, thus satisfying local needs.
Identification of a Formal Adult-Youth Programme Suited to the Parish Context

**A Youth Mentoring Programme**

Youth mentoring programmes contribute to the development of “a special bond of mutual commitment, respect, identification and loyalty” between young people and their older mentors according to Rhodes (2002, pp. 3-4). Community-based youth mentoring programmes often draw upon adult volunteers to spend time with young people with a view to providing guidance and support (Baker & Maguire, 2005; Rhodes & DuBois, 2006; Rhodes et al., 2002; Sipe, 2005). Both of these programmatic features appear to be relevant to the parish vision for its ministry to young people.
A key difference between the literature on formal youth mentoring programmes and the study context is that the literature focuses upon at-risk youth and study youth would not be considered to be at-risk socially, academically or economically. Despite this contextual factor, most study participants indicated that they thought mentoring likely to assist parish young people, particularly in the area of spiritual development. Mentoring-related benefits for both young people and older people were identified, with relationship development being identified for both age groups. Based on this information it would be relevant to implement a mentoring programme in the parish context. However, it would be premature to decide upon a mentoring programme as the most optimal choice without considering its assumptions and foci alongside the parish context and the identified youth and adults needs.

Two main purposes have been kept in the forefront throughout this study. One purpose is to include the voices of young people from within the study context alongside those of adult voices, attending to areas of commonality and difference. Another purpose has been to consider the study context alongside formal mentoring programme aims and assumptions (the proposed programme) to assess whether identified parish needs and goals would be adequately addressed by its implementation. The latter purpose involves considering whether the aims and assumptions of formal mentoring are the best fit with the parish context as well as any pre-programme implementation aspects that could be put in place to maximise the likelihood of a formal programme’s effectiveness.

Based on study findings, it emerged that youth respondents did not have the same expectations of the effects of mentoring as those of adult respondents.
Most youth survey respondents (83%) thought that a sense of wellbeing was an important area of ministry to young people, but only 33% thought that mentoring was likely to assist with developing it. This finding contrasted with 85% to 90% of adult respondents who considered mentoring likely to assist with a sense of wellbeing in young people. A similar pattern of difference was apparent in the ministry area of assisting with family and relationship issues, with adults considering mentoring more likely to assist in this area than young people. The theorised benefits of mentoring programmes include that young people will develop more positive relationships with parents, other adults and peers as well as greater emotional wellbeing (Rhodes, 2005). Although adult study respondents considered that mentoring would assist young people in ways similar to those identified in Rhodes’ model of youth mentoring (2005), young people who participated in this study did not.

Young people included in the study were not a homogeneous group with regard to their preferences for modes of participation in the parish. All youth survey respondents thought that spiritual development was an important area of ministry to young people and most (83%) thought that mentoring was likely to assist with this area. However, survey respondents were all church-attending young people.

Although some young people valued connecting to the parish through spiritual and faith-based activities, others preferred more social events and activities. In addition, whilst some young people were involved in regular service within a ministry area within the parish, others preferred to have little or occasional involvement in the parish community.
Study findings based on the perceptions and expectations of young people (taken as a whole) do not overwhelmingly support mentoring as the most flexible or responsive formal intervention that the parish could make.

In addition to presenting the features of formal youth mentoring programmes, the Literature Review chapter of this study also considered intergenerational programmes and youth-adult partnerships programmes. A number of pros and cons can now be identified about implementing these formal programme options in the parish setting.

**A Suitable Formal Adult-Youth Programme**

When the parish context is taken into consideration along with the features of youth mentoring programmes, intergenerational programmes and youth-adult partnerships programmes outlined in Table 17, it emerges that the intergenerational programme type would be most relevant to the parish, with the provisos that a rationale for mutual and reciprocal benefit to youth-adults be identified and that all parish adults should be eligible for inclusion in the programme.
Table 17.
A Comparison Between Youth Mentoring, Intergenerational and Youth-Adult Partnerships Programme Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAMME FEATURE</th>
<th>YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAMME</th>
<th>INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMME</th>
<th>YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAMME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult involvement</td>
<td>Any adult could be engaged as a mentor</td>
<td>By definition, intergenerational programmes involve a generation gap. Some adult-youth interactions would not be considered intergenerational</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships include all youth-adult age group combinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Activity is often negotiated, but tend to focus on the development of the young person</td>
<td>Age-related or generational needs are a focus of the activity within intergenerational programmes</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnership activity is often focused beyond the needs of the generational groups involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth-adult relationship</td>
<td>Traditional definitions focus on the adult mentoring the young person</td>
<td>Mentoring-like relationships and mutual or reciprocal relationships between adults and youth are possible</td>
<td>Requires equal power relationships between youth and adults to succeed. The collaboration and co-learning of youth and adults is emphasised. Mentoring may occur as a way of developing the skills of participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Commitment</td>
<td>Regular meetings between mentor and mentee are required with a view to encouraging the development of a close relationship between them</td>
<td>Intergenerational programmes range through regular and ongoing interactions to one-off, short-term or irregular commitments</td>
<td>Youth-adult partnerships vary from ongoing commitment to an organisation and its goals to commitment to a specific project, group or event</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The underlying assumptions of the proposed programme intervention need to be identified and compared with characteristics of the context to check that they are compatible. For example, one of the rationales for the kinds of reciprocal benefits that Intergenerational Programmes can promote is based on the assumption that both the young and the old are more dependent or socially isolated than other generations and that it makes inherent sense for them to be brought together so that they can share resources (Jones et al., 2004; Kaplan, 2001). Study findings have indicated that some young people feel socially isolated within the parish, but this factor was not evident amongst older study...
participants. Remaining alert to reciprocal or complementary youth-adult benefits is a key to ensuring that both youth and adult age groups are motivated to participate in the parish programme. Emphasis on the importance of youth participation to the health and vitality of the parish as a whole is a motivation likely to engage every adult age group, whilst opportunities for social and fun activities are likely to attract a range of young people.

With regard to adult involvement, the adult-youth partnerships and youth mentoring parameters are much better suited to the parish context where young people have the opportunity to interact with a range of adult age groups. Study findings regarding close relationships in the parish suggested that young people more commonly form closer relationships with adults in adjacent age groups to their own, but that intergenerational relationships between young people and older people do occur in the parish.

A finding of interest within the current study is that young people indicated a preference for variety, fun, occasional involvement and one-off events with regard to their own participation in the parish. Mentoring programmes typically involve regular and ongoing scheduled interactions between mentors and their mentees and this is designed to promote the development of a close relationship between them (Rhodes, 2002; Rhodes & DuBois, 2006). Intergenerational and adult-youth partnerships programmes are more flexible about the length of commitment and frequency of contact between adults and young people since these are often determined by the organisation, group, project or event concerned.

Close relationships between adults and young people in the parish at the time the data for this research were gathered (2006) were not the norm.
Therefore, to engage in full youth-adult partnership within the parish would involve a marked change in the way that adults and youth currently relate with each other. A parish-wide shift toward youth-adult partnerships would also be a big undertaking given the prevailing parish customs of adult leadership and decision-making. However, one area where youth and adults could readily develop partnership within the parish is in the area of youth ministry. Young people and adults could begin to work collaboratively and in partnership to develop a youth ministry programme and team with broad appeal to youth.

An intergenerational programme focus is flexible enough to allow traditional adult-youth mentoring-like relationships to develop as well as allowing for mutuality and reciprocity to develop between youth and parish adults. Therefore, mentoring-like relationships involving adults mentoring youth and youth mentoring adults could emerge, as well as youth-adult partnerships. This approach would allow change in the parish to unfold more gently with a range of possible adult-youth relationships being facilitated. Overall, a parish adult-youth programme is recommended that facilitates activities and projects that parish adults and young people can engage in according to their shared interests and concerns.

**Adult-Youth Activities**

This study led to the identification of a number of opportunities for and barriers to youth participation in the parish. As a result I recommend that the parish adopt a range of structured activities designed to bring parish youth and adults together in a way that allows easy interactions to occur. A middle aged
study participant suggested that a joint project would be an ideal way of getting youth and adults together, especially something that they could ‘chat’ over.

An adult-youth programme that allows for some flexibility and variety as well as some one-off or defined short-term commitments may be most satisfactory overall. A number of youth focus group and interview participants expressed that they preferred one-off events and occasional participation in the parish. In addition, youth survey respondents were evenly divided between preferring their participation in church services to be frequent (weekly to fortnightly) or occasional (monthly) and most youth survey respondents (67%) preferred their participation in community activities to be occasional (monthly). A number of young people expressed a preference for fun and variety, including things to look forward to. These findings indicate that ongoing and regular participation in parish activities or programmes may suit some, but not all young people.

Spiritual development presents as a youth ministry area where a mentoring intervention would be appropriate. All youth survey respondents and most adult survey respondents considered spiritual development to be a ministry area of high importance for young people. Most young people (83%) and adult respondents (85% to 95%) thought that a parish-based mentoring programme would be likely to assist youth development in this ministry area. However, there is a difference between traditional youth group ways of ministering to young people in the area of spiritual development and the recommendations made within this study. Rather than having one or two adult youth leaders who discuss spiritual matters with young people, it is recommended that a number of parish adults get involved in a discussion group with young people that focuses
on spiritual topics (adult attendance could rotate). Young people who participated in this study identified that it was important to them to be able to question their faith and to have adults model their faith rather than tell them what they should believe. Creating the opportunity for youth and adults to share ideas and experiences around faith and spirituality in a group context would likely promote the development of mentoring-like relationships. Attention to the kinds of activities and processes associated with effective adult-youth relationships (outlined in the Literature Review chapter) is also recommended.

Expecting and accepting that youth participation in parish activities (both worship and community) will often fluctuate, may be an adult challenge particular to this context. As one older study participant said, “We haven’t got a youth problem – we haven’t got a group of youth. What we’ve got is a few people and we can’t run a programme.” Running a programme that relies on regular youth attendance does present a challenge when low youth numbers and fluctuating rates of youth attendance are considered together. A programme that involves a group of caring adults interacting with interested and available young people may be more viable and satisfying under the circumstances.

The provision of a wide range of activities of interest to both young people and adults is an important programme component likely to support the development of effective adult-youth relationships. According to MacCallum and colleagues (2006, p. 69), “Although this activity or action varies enormously from [intergenerational] project to project, its existence is critical.” Within intergenerational projects, activity becomes the basis for the development of relationships between young people and older people (MacCallum et al., 2006).
The activities that become the focus of a parish programme are yet to be decided and it makes sense to leave the activity options open so that they can respond to youth and adult-identified interests, concerns and needs. A wide range of within-parish or beyond-parish projects and activities are possible and it is recommended that these be identified and organised through ongoing communication and consultation between parish adults and young people. It is worth noting at this point that if young people are willing to participate in regular parish activities, they may need additional supports and resources from adults to sustain their involvement.

The Place of Youth Mentoring in a Parish Youth-Adult Activity Programme

DuBois and Karcher (2005) acknowledge that the majority of youth mentoring relationships develop naturally in settings where young people and adults spend significant amounts of time together. According to Zimmerman and colleagues, natural mentors are

…nonparental adults, such as extended family members, teachers, or neighbours, from whom a young person receives support and guidance as a result of a relationship developed without the help of a programme specifically designed to connect youth and adults to form such a relationship (i.e., program mentors)” (Zimmerman et al., 2005, p. 143)

According to this definition, parish adults are a significant potential source of natural mentors for parish young people.

When intergenerational and adult-youth partnerships programme types are also considered, mentoring becomes one kind of adult-youth relationship that may occur occasionally (when skill development is required) or as an ongoing relationship where this is relevant to the needs of the young people or the adults within the programme. Overall, both intergenerational and adult-youth
partnerships programmes appear to include the possibility that young people could mentor adults, depending on the project, interest or activity concerned. It is possible that a parish adult-youth activity programme could engage young people in mentoring adults if young people were acknowledged to have skills or experiences that adults wanted to develop. Two skill development areas in which young people could potentially mentor adults would be information technology and communication with young people. There is also the possibility of youth and adults working together to mentor other parish members in areas such as youth ministry development.

A Summary of Parish Recommendations

Consideration of parish aims, study findings and reference to the adult-youth relationship literature has resulted in my recommendation that the parish implement an adult-youth activity programme. Prior to the implementation of the programme I recommended that the parish engage in the following four pre-programme activities:

1. Address barriers to communication between youth and adults
2. Be aware of power differences between adults and youth
3. Be willing to support youth-initiated change
4. Develop a shared vision for youth participation in the parish

Barbara Rogoff’s (2003) theoretical approach has assisted with a foregrounding of interpersonal relationships between parish adults and youth. Study findings regarding the individual and cultural/institutional planes have been included to facilitate a richer understanding of how adult-youth relationships are shaped, or might be shaped differently, within this particular
context. Figure 18 models the expected relationship between pre-programme, programme and desired outcome considerations.
Figure 18. The anticipated relationship between pre-programme considerations, a parish adult-youth activity programme and desired parish outcomes.
Study Strengths and Limitations

On reflection, the research approach adopted within this study gave rise to some specific strengths and limitations.

The study approach adopted has demonstrated the advantage of considering the context in-depth prior to the design, development and implementation of a formal programme.

An important feature of the action research approach which initially guided the formation of this study was to include as many parish voices as possible. This approach was based on the assumption that broad parish consultation and input would promote future programme participation or support as well as leading to the formation of study recommendations that included context-related needs.

The process outlined within this study was aimed at assisting the parish in choosing a programme that would be complementary to its customs and procedures. This was achieved by taking into account the parish custom of conducting youth ministries in groups.

The illuminative evaluation approach adopted within this study was very useful in taking the study to a deeper level than would have occurred if it had focused on asking people about their preferences alone. When comparisons were made: (a) between written documents and study participant perceptions or expectations; (b) between study participant perceptions or expectations and actual behaviours or policies; and (c) between youth perceptions and adult perceptions; gaps and inconsistencies were identified. This made it possible to consider interventions and recommendations that would be likely to support and assist the parish in developing and implementing an effective youth-adult programme. The
outcome was that it was possible to go beyond identifying preferences or expectations to determining adult and youth needs in relation to youth participation and adult-youth relationships in the parish.

Attention to contextual factors and considerations within this study led to the identification of a number of pre-programme activities designed to ameliorate identified organisational or interpersonal weaknesses. Barbara Rogoff’s sociocultural framework for analysis was a useful addition to the study approach outlined above because it facilitated the consideration of three planes (individual, interpersonal, community/institutional), leading to a richer analysis focused on facilitating the achievement of context-identified priorities (adult-youth relationships and youth participation). The Literature Review chapter of this study highlighted that the theoretical approaches that inform adult-youth programme implementation do involve consideration of individual, interpersonal and community factors, but with different emphasis and foci. Careful consideration of the interpersonal context of the parish facilitated the identification of key influences from all three planes (individual, interpersonal and institutional-cultural) and this informed the development of recommendations designed to improve the likelihood of an effective formal programme implementation.

This study began with a parish vision to integrate young people with the faith (worshipping) community and this parish-identified focus had an influence on the design of the study. The study initially focused on engaging adults and youth who attended church services in the parish and the survey was designed with this target group in mind. My approach to the study involved an action research orientation however and as the study progressed I observed that focusing on worshipping parish members did not include all young people participating in the parish. To include all
young people connected to the parish, young people who were more loosely connected with the parish (only occasionally attending church) or who were participating in ministry or community activities were invited to participate through focus groups. In addition I approached some young people personally to invite them to discuss their mentoring-like relationships in the parish with me.

It would have been optimal to develop a survey that was administered to and included the interests of all parish connected young people from the beginning of the study. In addition, because the survey was aimed at worshipping parish members it focused on church service and ministry related activities. A broader focus from the beginning would have incorporated all parish youth activities and relationships. The survey could have gathered more in-depth information on general youth parish involvements, perceptions of older people (by youth) and of younger people (by adults). This would have allowed more age-related contextual factors to be identified and addressed in the programme recommendations.

This study engaged with a small number of parish-connected young people aged between 16 and 25 years. Low youth numbers made it difficult to form any strong youth-based conclusions and recommendations regarding their participation in the parish or their non-parental adult relationships in the parish. With a broader study focus it may have been possible to contact young people whose parents were connected to the parish, but who did not choose to engage with parish activities; or young people currently aged 16-25 who had participated in the parish community previously, but who no longer did so. A larger number of youth included in the project would have potentially incorporated greater variance in youth perceptions and experiences of participation in the parish as well as providing a better representation of this stakeholder group. If youth numbers were to increase in the
parish it would be very important to update information regarding youth opinions and preferences concerning youth mentoring and youth participation in the parish.

Implications for the Youth Mentoring and Adult-Youth Relationship Fields

The current study has identified that context is a useful pre-programme development and implementation consideration because it has implications for both the type of programme developed and the kinds of pre-programme activities that could be undertaken to promote the success of the programme when it is implemented. Study findings have also demonstrated that the key characteristics of formal adult-youth programmes can be evaluated and combined to complement or develop the community or organisational context concerned.

Based on the process of context exploration and evaluation demonstrated within this study, it is concluded that a limitation apparent within the youth mentoring field is the tendency to adopt overly narrow definitions of youth mentoring. In addition, some of the assumptions of youth mentoring need to be examined more closely to check whether they are borne out in research and practice.

Study findings indicated that the benefits of developing closer adult-youth relationships were reciprocal, with the potential for young people to develop their faith and experience a stronger sense of community and for adults to experience the benefits of relationships with other generations. This notion of reciprocity is not readily apparent in definitions of youth mentoring pertaining to both formal mentoring programmes and natural mentoring relationships, where it is assumed that the older person will act as a mentor to the younger person, with most of the benefits accruing to the younger person (Rhodes, 2002; Zimmerman et al., 2005).
intergenerational programme field has more recently begun to explore notions regarding the benefits of intergenerational relationships for both the younger and the older participants.

Typical definitions of youth mentoring stipulate that the older person mentors the young person and although examples of this are common, the definitions fail to acknowledge that youth can and do mentor adults at times. In the current study, a young person began to mentor an adult in operating the sound system during church services (after data collection for this study had concluded). It seems important to allow that youth can and do mentor adults under some circumstances, particularly when a community or organisational goal is to promote equal and cooperative relationships between young people and adults.

The literature concerning youth mentoring relationships emphasises that ongoing contact between youth and adults can lead to the development of close relationships (Rhodes, 2002; Zimmerman et al., 2005). Ongoing contact is an issue of importance within this study because it raises questions about how often is enough and whether the contact leads to the development of closer adult-youth relationships. Within this study, ongoing (but not necessarily regular) contact between youth and adults through parish activities was not a sufficient condition to ensure the development of either close relationships or mentoring-like relationships between them. Findings presented indicated that both young people and adults experienced difficulty in communicating and interacting with one another.

My conclusion is that the youth mentoring and intergenerational programme fields in particular could include the importance of developing social skills or communication skills for both young people and adults as a pre-programme activity. I consider this kind of pre-programme activity an important consideration when
setting up formal adult-youth programmes, particularly in organisational and small community settings where young people and adults do not typically work together.

The youth mentoring field as a whole appears to acknowledge that young people with well-developed skills are most likely to benefit from mentoring relationships with adults. Rhodes (2002, p. 30) states that,

A successful relationship with a caring adult may, in fact, be a byproduct of healthy development…Youth who are physically attractive or intelligent, who have engaging dispositions or intense interests…may be primed for higher levels of involvement with adults than are peers who lack these qualities.

This idea is also reflected by Zimmerman and colleagues work when they noted that the personal bond formed through natural mentoring relationships may be longer lasting than those formed through formal mentoring programmes because the young people involved are likely to be more confident and socially capable and the connection between the partners is more “organic” (2005, pp.143-144).

Within this study it was suggested that youth and adults would both benefit from support in the area of communicating with one another. This recommendation has a different emphasis to that of youth mentoring programmes that often provide training to adults so that they can support young people more effectively, or natural mentoring relationship research that largely considers young people who managed to establish mentoring-like relationships with adults themselves (but not necessarily those who didn’t). Overall, this study’s findings indicated that whereas a small number of young people did establish natural mentoring relationships within the parish, others would have benefited from support with their interactions with parish adults. Communication skills between youth and adults were found to be an issue in a community where youth would not be considered to be at-risk socially.
Within a formal adult-youth programme context, communication workshop opportunities for young people and adults may serve to promote the development of good relationship between them as well as the overall effectiveness of the programme.

Implications for Future Research

The youth-adult relationship field would benefit from further research into age-related and contextual influences upon the development of close youth-adult relationships.

Young people do not constitute a homogeneous group based on age and future youth mentoring research may need to take this into account when conducting effectiveness studies. Within the current study, the majority of youth participants indicated that they did not think that a parish-based mentoring programme would be likely to support them with a sense of wellbeing or family and relationship issues. This finding contrasted with the model of youth mentoring presented by Rhodes (2005) where it is indicated that effective mentoring relationships are expected to enhance the social and emotional development of the young person, including improved parental relationships. Rhodes (2002, p. 39) states that,

> When an adolescent feels safe and accepted in the presence of a mentor, a fuller range of feelings and thoughts and different ways of relating and being related to, can grow.

However, Rhodes (2002, p. 49) later says that,

> Because older adolescents tend to be less interested in establishing intimate emotional ties with nonparental adults, they may choose to focus instead on the vocational skill-building and role-modeling aspects of a mentoring relationship.
Young people in the current study indicated that they thought a parish-based mentoring programme was likely to support them with their spiritual development and that this area was an important aspect of a parish ministry to young people. This finding seems to support Rhodes’ comments about older adolescents, since young people in the current study were aged sixteen years and over and youth spiritual development in a parish setting is likely to emphasise role modelling.

Based on study findings it also seems unlikely that parish young people would commit to spending regular time with a parish adult one-on-one with the sole purpose of developing a relationship, because youth did not identify this as a need within the study. This finding corroborates a comment made by Rhodes (2002, p. 34) that adolescents aged over fourteen years are more likely to prefer “…group-based programs, where adults are available on the sidelines but are not there necessarily for the purpose of forming close bonds.”

Further research is required to ascertain whether the age of the young people involved in formal programmes has an influence on the kinds of activities and adult-youth relationships that they perceive to be most relevant to them. Information of this kind would be useful in determining the most appropriate formal programme structure to offer to different youth age groups as well as the activities included and the kinds of adult-youth relationships that are encouraged or supported. It is possible that mentoring is one form of adult-youth relationship that is more relevant to younger youth age groups. However, without further research it should not be assumed that close or mentoring-like relationships between older youth and adults do not occur. Young people aged 16 years and over did think that a parish-based mentoring programme would be likely to assist them in the area of spiritual development. Further research needs to consider the range of close adult-youth
relationships (e.g., mentoring, intergenerational, youth-adult partnerships) that can form between adults and young people as well as the contextual factors that make them more or less relevant to the young people and adults concerned.

Intergenerational theory and research particularly emphasise age as an important factor in the development of relationships between young people and older people. VanderVen (2004) has called for a revision of Erikson’s lifespan development theory given the range of adult generational groups and youth interactions that are possible today. Future intergenerational research based on lifespan developmental theory could explore the age-related motivational concerns of different generational groups of adults alongside those of young people to identify programme activities and contextual factors that would enhance reciprocity for two or even multiple adult-youth age groups.

Further research is also needed into the individual and contextual factors that influence the development of close youth-adult relationships. With regard to mentoring, it would be particularly useful to study a formal adult-youth programme that was set up for a purpose other than mentoring and to explore which young people developed natural mentoring relationships with adults and what the supportive factors were for those involved.

Future research could extend the existing youth mentoring literature through a further exploration of the range of community factors (both positive and negative) that influence the effective implementation of youth mentoring programmes. A deeper understanding of such factors could assist the development of communities where effective adult-youth relationships are encouraged and supported by the culture of the community as well as by its formal programmes.
preparation at the community level may render programme design and implementation more effective as well as supporting change.

Overall, this study has demonstrated that dialogue and reference between different fields of study would be beneficial with regard to future research in the youth-adult relationship field. Each of the formal adult-youth programme types included within this study has incorporated strengths and insights relevant to the others and consideration of these would enhance the overall scope and depth of research in the field.


Big Brothers Big Sisters. (n.d.). Who we are. Retrieved 8th April, 2008, from (http://www.bbbs.org/site/c.diJKKYPJJvH/b.1539759/k.2640/Who_We_Are.htm


3&s=1438


APPENDIX 1

Parish Survey

Note. Some personal and parish identifying information has been removed or changed within the survey document. The names of the churches involved have been changed to “Newer Church” and “Older Church.”
Involvement of Young People in the Parish - Survey Questionnaire

I am a Research Masters in Training student at Murdoch University investigating the involvement of young people in this parish under the supervision of Dr. Judith MacCallum. You can help in this study by consenting to complete a survey that is designed to find out your views about:

A mentoring *programme* for young people within this parish, and
The participation of young people within this parish.

This survey will be administered, on a voluntary basis, to all people aged *16 years and over* who attend the 7:45am or 9:30am services at Newer Church or the 8am service at Older Church over a period of four Sundays. It is anticipated that it will take about 15 minutes of your time to complete the survey. You can decide to withdraw your consent at any time. All information given during the survey is confidential and no names or other information that might identify you will be used in any publication arising from the research. Feedback on the survey will be provided through a power point presentation after church services and the data collected in this survey will be presented anonymously, e.g. *male, 56 – 65 years*.

If you are willing to participate in this study, could you please complete the consent details below. If you have any questions about this project please feel free to contact either myself, Miriam Brooker on XXXXXXXXX or my supervisor, Dr Judith MacCallum on XXXXXXXXX. My supervisor and I are happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have on how this study has been conducted, or alternatively you can contact Murdoch University’s Human Research Ethics Committee on XXXXXXXXX.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing this survey.

Miriam Brooker has developed this survey in consultation with the Parish Mentoring Programme Steering Committee: <6 names>

**********************************************************************
**************
I (the participant) am aged 16 years of age or over and I have read the information above. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to take part in this activity, however, I know that I may change my mind and stop at any time, without explanation or penalty.

I understand that all information provided is treated as confidential and will not be released by the investigator unless required to do so by law.

I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published provided my name or other information that might identify me is not used.

Participant/Authorised Representative:
Signed: Date:

Investigator: (Chief Investigator who must be a member of Murdoch Staff)
Signed: Date:
Dr Judith MacCallum
Relationships at Newer Church and Older Church

When you attend services in this parish which service do you usually (or most often) attend?

(Please place an X in one box only)

7: 45 am Newer Church
9: 30 am Newer Church
8: 00 am Older Church

Do you know people at Newer Church or Older Church through attendance at this church?

(Please place an X in one box only)

Yes
No

If NO, please go to Question 7 on Page 5.

Which people at Newer Church or Older Church are you closest to and what age groups do they belong to?

(Please call to mind the 6 non-family members that you feel closest to and identify their approximate age-range below. Give each person an ‘X’ and place it on the right-hand side of the table).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>One ‘X’ per person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 - 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - 45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 - 55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 - 65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66 - 75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 - 85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: Please check that you have placed 6 X’s in the table above.
Are you involved in any mentoring-like relationships within this parish?

For the purposes of this survey mentoring-like relationships are non-parental relationships where a more experienced person provides support and guidance to a less experienced person. You might be the more or the less experienced person in the relationship.

(Please place an X in one box only)

Yes
No

Were you involved in the ‘Buddy’ programme that has operated in this parish in the past?

(Please place an X in one box only)

Yes
No

Have you been involved in mentoring-like relationships with young people within this parish in the past? NB: If you were the young person in the relationship (aged 12 – 25) please tick ‘yes’ also.

(Please place an X in one box only)

Yes
No

If you answered YES to Questions 4, 5 or 6 please provide your details below if you would like to be contacted by the researcher (Michelle Brooker) to be interviewed about mentoring-like relationships within this parish.

*********************************

Yes, I would like to be contacted for an interview:

Name: __________________________________________________________

Telephone Number: ____________________________________________

E-mail Address: (if preferred) _________________________________
What do you think a mentoring programme in this parish might offer younger people?

For the purposes of this survey ‘younger’ people are within the age-range of 12 – 25 years.

_______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________

What do you think a mentoring programme in this parish might offer older people?

For the purposes of this survey, ‘older’ people are aged 26 years and over.

_______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________
Beliefs about Ministry to Young People

How important are each of the following areas as aspects of a parish ministry to young people?

(Listed below are areas that parish ministry might assist a younger person aged between 12 and 25. Please consider the importance of each area and circle the number that best reflects your answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very low importance</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 Very high importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Development as an Anglican
Career development
Spiritual development
Family or relationship issues
Community service
Sense of wellbeing
Gaining access to resources or support
Giving money to the parish
Or caring for parish resources
How likely is it that a parish mentoring programme will assist young people in each of the following areas?

(Listed below are areas that a parish mentoring programme might assist a younger person aged between 12 and 25. Please consider the likelihood of each area occurring and circle the number that best reflects your answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Very unlikely</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Very likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development as an Anglican</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career development</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual development</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family or relationship issues</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community service</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaining access to resources or support</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving money to the parish or caring for parish resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Young People in the Parish – Participation in Church Services

How often do young people as a group participate in activities concerned with the operation of church services in this parish “on average”?

Examples would include reading, serving, welcoming, administering communion, prayers etc.

1  2  3                4                5
Weekly         Fortnightly        Monthly       Occasionally   Almost Never

How often would you like young people as a group to participate in activities concerned with the operation of church services in this parish?

1  2  3                4                5
Weekly         Fortnightly        Monthly       Occasionally   Almost Never

Which activities concerned with the operation of church services in this parish are you aware that young people participate in currently?

(Please place an X next to any activities that apply)

First or Second Readings
Administering Communion
Collecting the Offerings
Sacristan Duties
Cleaning
Sound System Operation
Other (please specify)
Young People in the Parish – Participation in Parish Community

How often do young people as a group participate in activities concerned with the wider parish community “on average”?

Examples would include parish council, pastoral assistant/parish visiting, fundraising, prayer or study group membership, parish dinners etc.

1 2 3 4 5
Weekly Fortnightly Monthly Occasionally Almost Never

How often would you like young people to participate in activities concerned with the wider parish community in the future?

1 2 3 4 5
Weekly Fortnightly Monthly Occasionally Almost Never

Which activities concerned with the parish community are you aware that young people participate in currently?

(Please place an X next to any activities that apply)

Parish Council           Parish Dinners
Pastoral Assistant/Visiting Prayer Groups
Stewardship              Study Groups
Fund Raising             Easter or Christmas Events
Youth Group               Parish Visioning Days
Care or Maintenance of Parish Property Making or Fixing Resources
Other (please specify)
Would you feel uncomfortable with a decrease in youth participation in this parish?

(Please place an X in one box only)
Yes ☐
No ☐

If you answered Yes to the above question, what would be your concerns?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Would you feel uncomfortable with an increase in youth participation in this parish?

(Please place an X in one box only)
Yes ☐
No ☐

If you answered Yes to the above question, what would be your concerns?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Demographics

How long have you been involved with this parish congregation?

(Please place an X in the box that applies to you).

0 – 5 years  
6 – 10 years  
11 – 15 years  
16 – 20 years  
21+ years

What is your current occupation?

(Please place an X in the box that best reflects your current occupation. Please check one box only)

I am studying at high school  
I am unemployed  
I have left school and I am training or studying  
I am in paid employment  
I am performing home duties  
I am retired  
I am involved in volunteer work

What is the main area of learning that best reflects your current training, study, employment or past employment?

(Please place an X in the box that best reflects your main area of learning. Please check one box only).
NB: If you are studying at school please go on to Question 16.

Education

Human Wellbeing (Spiritual, Social, Psychological)

Human Health or Medicine

Hospitality, Service or Entertainment Industry

Artistic pursuits

Building and related services

Information Technology or Media

Business, Marketing or Law

Environmental or Animal Concerns

Science, Engineering or Mining

Primary Industry

Manufacture

Other Area of Learning: _______________________ (Please specify)
What is your level of formal qualification?

(Please place an X in the box that best reflects your formal qualifications. Please check one box only).

High School Graduation or TEE

TAFE or Trade Certificate

Degree or Diploma

Higher Degree or Diploma

Other Qualification: ___________________ (please specify).

I do not have any formal qualifications

Have you ever been involved in a formal mentoring programme because of employment or volunteer work?

Yes

No

If YES, Please specify the nature of your mentoring experience below:

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

(Please go on to the next page)
What is your gender?
(Please place an X in the box that applies to you)
Male
Female

Which age group do you belong to?
(Please place an X in the box that applies to you).
16 – 25 years
26 – 35 years
36 – 45 years
46 – 55 years
56 – 65 years
66 – 75 years
76 – 85 years
86+ years

Thank you for completing this survey 😊

Please place your survey form in the box provided by the church exit doors or in the hall foyer;

Or you can request a pre-paid and addressed envelope at the church exit doors to mail your survey back later.
APPENDIX 2

Benefits of Mentoring for Younger and Older People

Friendship opportunities

For older people: Interpersonal development  n=17
Chance to "know" others; companion along the way; friendship; companionship, fellowship, understanding; develop friendships and relationships; someone cares; companionship; better relationship and friendship; someone to talk to outside "the family; communication; meaningful relationship; a chance to interact with youth; friendship; young people are so great!; friendship; caring and companionship; love opportunity; companionship, encouragement; interaction and involvement.

For older people: Individual development  n=3
Respect; sense of wellbeing; also less self-centredness; the chance to feel like someone needs them

For young people: Interpersonal development  n=22
Developing relationships, and a relationship beyond genetic family; chance to "know" others; companion along the way; a place of friendship and acceptance outside family or other roles and expectations; an adult friendship other than their parents to talk to and share; develop friendships and relationships; someone cares; communication; someone other than family to relate to; the joy of being together; someone's who is interested and cares about them; to bond with others who are interested in what is being offered by the mentor; experience a wider circle of friendships; a friend they can trust; friendship; opportunity for open ended discussion; a closeness caring and sharing outside the family – love; respect; the feeling of a special friend who cares; easier communication; interesting and attracting; not just as those who should take on the 'duties' of keeping a parish infrastructure kicking;.

For young people: Individual development  n=4
A sense that someone cares; self-esteem love; the realization that they are cared for by an older person; early development of a sense of wellbeing.

Faith and spiritual development

For older people: Interpersonal development  n=8
Help them develop in faith and life; a way of seeing young people as individuals who need to know the love of Christ; an opportunity to 'receive' Christian discipleship; the sharing of God's love - the joy of a 'Church' family; the opportunity to share faith with the younger generation; fresher, newer,
approaches to worship; maybe get satisfaction and pleasure at watching the young people develop and mature spiritually; supporting an older person's faith; guidance on the spiritual journey.

For older people: Individual development  n=6
A re-engagement with their own faith and relationship with Jesus; to develop and foster their spiritual life; growth in their own faith; growth in faith; helps me live out my faith; helps me to look at my own faith journey through new eyes; spiritual maturity and/or growth; a better understanding of the spiritual needs of young people in today's society (and other needs).

For young people: Interpersonal development  n=17
An opportunity to feel engaged in a spiritual journey with companions; avenue along which to explore faith; experience of an older persons experience of the Christian Way particularly in relationship to God/Christ; nurturing in faith and life; faith guidance; sense of encouragement to explore their spiritual formation as individuals, and as part of a community; spiritual nurturing; in which faith can be deepened; where the seeds/fruit of living beyond oneself might be sown or come into season; guidance of how to develop a closer relationship with Christ; an opportunity to 'receive' Christian discipleship; to develop and foster their spiritual life; a chance to help younger people in their spiritual growth; spiritual support and guidance; spiritual guidance; open their eyes to the love and 'fun' they can enjoy in spiritual fellowship; safe environment to explore their spiritual concerns and queries; experience of an older persons experience of the Christian Way particularly in relationship to God/Christ; help in guiding their spiritual growth including finding other sources of help; [help with] faith challenges in life; faith is sustained by relationships; opportunity to discuss their faith.

For young people: Individual development  n=12
Spiritual development; a firm basis to continue learning and growing in their faith; engagement in their faith journey; sense of access to faith tradition; development as an Anglican; spiritual development; growth in faith; better knowledge of Christianity; opportunity to grow in faith and spiritual maturity; early development of a sense of faith; spiritual and mental growth and stability; knowledge of Christianity; knowledge of the personality of God, Holy Spirit.

New relationships with other generations

For older people: Interpersonal development  n=16
A relationship with someone of a different generation; a bond between the younger and older people; connection with non-family people of a different age group; Encourage interactions, relationships, across age groups; a relationship with someone of a different generation; a chance to explore younger minds; help to dispel "us and them" attitudes between older and younger people; helps to keep me connected with young people who live in such a different world from the one in which I grew up; generation gap bridging; to break barriers between old and young; the enthusiasm, vigour and general joy-de-vie of the young can be
infectious and can light a spark; they have some refreshing views and ideas to share; interaction with keen young minds; extending horizons - that exist between the 50 year + seniors + 'whipper snippers'; older people can benefit as much as younger in intergenerational activities; widen range of friendships to include youngsters who are the products of a 'different' environment, who have been encouraged to espouse 'new' attitudes and expectations; to get in touch with today's youth; commit to younger person where generally no opportunity to do so; the opportunity to engage with younger people.

**For older people: Individual development  n=11**
Understanding of other generations and points of view; the knowledge of youthful worlds; get to better understand their own children/grandchildren; awareness of how differently younger people sometimes view situations and how valid their view point can be; ‘pairing’ of older with younger members sometimes, would help keep the 'older' feeling young; an understanding of what younger people think and how "they operate" in today's world; a better understanding of the spiritual needs of young people in today's society (and other needs); hope for the future; insight into the needs of young people; and to get in touch with today’s youth; helps to keep me connected with young people who live in such a different world from the one in which I grew up.

**For young people: Interpersonal development  n=12**
A closer relationship between young and old; inclusivity and connection across the age ranges; encourage interactions, relationships, across age groups; the opportunity of the love and fellowship that 'older' members will give and share with them; help to dispel "us and them attitudes between younger and older people; discover that old people were young once and accept that they will get older, too; including more mature folk; hear about the 'olden days'; the connection with an older 'other-than-family' person whom they can trust; perhaps learn something from the older person's experience; generation gap bridging; experience of an older persons experience of the Christian Way particularly in relationship to God/Christ and in relationships with others; worth trying - chance to get to know an older age group who are not emotionally involved and hopefully are non-judgmental; bridging the age gap; different relationships in other age groups; contact and a relationship with others they would not normally associate with; opportunity to interact with adults;.

**For young people: Individual development  n=1**
An acceptance and understanding that age ensures folk take longer 'to do' most tasks, even if willing; awareness of how differently older people sometimes view situations.

**Development of a sense of community**

**For older people: Interpersonal development  n=5**
Development of a more effective community; opportunity for involvement; development of strong relationships/bonds with other members of the community; better sense of community; aid newcomers to the church; Help
those who are divorced, separated, widowed, lonely etc; a deeper parish fellowship!

For older people: Individual development  n=7
Satisfaction of involvement; a sense of belonging; stronger connection and therefore sense of belonging; a feeling of belonging; a greater sense of belonging; a feeling of being part of a group, of having something to offer; a sense of belonging.

For young people: Interpersonal development  n=18
Grow within the parish; opportunity for involvement; to give them a real sense of belong and being able to contribute; acceptance within the church; a place of hospitality and welcome; development of more effective community; development of strong relationships/bonds with other members of the community; a sense of community; social consciousness; opportunities to participate more fully in the life of the parish; aid newcomers to the church to settle; put young people in touch with other social activities; involvement, connectedness; increased solidarity and sense of community membership; a structured nurturing within the community; connections to other people; extended family within the parish; social life; the joy, friendship of a Christian community.

For young people: Individual development  n=10
A sense of connection; strong commitment needed from participants - all age groups; a sense of affirmation and (true) belonging; a sense of belonging; stronger connection and therefore sense of belonging; a feeling of belonging; a sense of belonging; sense of belonging; feeling of belonging, develop a sense of belonging and significance in the church.

Support and safety

For older people: Interpersonal development  n=7
Support systems; support; I think this is already in place in that the Church family looks out and cares for others; support; support; possibly help with relationships with children; opportunity to support younger parishioners as above (support as an extension of family support).

For older people: Individual development  n=1
Family or relationship issues; gaining access to resources or support.

For young people: Interpersonal development  n=25
Support; the opportunity for support; support+++; an extended 'family' and the support that provides safety - a safe 'place to go'; a safe person to turn to - to discuss any issue that may challenge them in their lives; I think the mentoring program is essential because it provides young people with a community of support at a time when they naturally experience separation from their parents;
support systems; support in day to day living; support when they experience problems at home or school; to know someone outside their peer/age group to talk over worrying issues, as and if they arise; emotional support; support, the experience of their life-time to help them with any difficulties they may be facing in their lives; safety net; support and encouragement; help with relationship issues particularly with parents and partners; support as an extension of family support, occasionally a substitute for it; help with life-skills; family or relationship issues; also [opportunity to support] older people; ascertain their goals or yearnings, e.g. helping disadvantaged in immediate and wider community and helping them make contact with a group(s); a sounding board; listener who is active if needs to be; a friend they can trust; trust in the mentors; someone outside the family to talk to; share their challenges; and one who knows that growing up can be difficult (outside family); the connection with an older 'other-than-family' person whom they can trust.

For young people: Individual development  n=4
Employment prospects; to develop into well adjusted individuals; understanding of family or relationship issues, if these are not helped at home or school, for that particular person; a mentor could help to make someone gain confidence, and feel good about themselves and what they do.

Learning and challenge

For Older People: Interpersonal development  n=4
Exchange of views - a widening of their world view; the learning can go both ways; a knowledge of ways and thoughts of others; learn from their partner (mentoree); a different point of view on many subjects;

For Older People: Individual Development  n=11
Understanding, new and fresh ideas; older people will come to understand young people more deeply; a broader understanding of younger people's issues of today; flexibility of their existing views and faith formation and its connection to the younger generation; sense of challenge, i.e. of perhaps views that may be held and may have boundaries stretched; understanding/insight of the youth's outlook in current times; satisfaction (and challenge perhaps); learning, etc; new and exciting ideas; a new perspective; experience, appreciations of other view points, tolerance.

For Young People: Interpersonal development  n=4
An opportunity to get to know a wider variety of views; someone to look up to and learn from; perhaps learn something from the older person's experience; experience/knowledge opportunity.

For Young People: Individual development  n=9
As well as greater insight into another person's faith and walk in life; personal development; an understanding of the ritual of church services; life experience, knowledge; understanding; greater understanding; knowledge of 'the ropes' as
far as ceremony goes; understanding possibilities that exist; a knowledge of ways and thoughts of others;

**Guidance**

For Young People: Interpersonal development  n=17
Guidance; faith guidance; direction, answers; in this way, the community can continue to help guide the young adult through a difficult time of development; guidance; guidance ... in day to day living; bring to their attention love, respect to elders; role model; guidance; someone outside the family to ... advise and share example; another dimension to "growing up"; guidance; guidance; enabling the young to see possibilities in life they might not otherwise be aware of; example; guidance, guidance and advice.

For Young People: development n=1
Sense of direction

**New opportunities to share**

For older people: Interpersonal development  n=7
A chance to revisit ones own experiences; share gifts; share life wisdom and experience;
a chance to pass on experience and knowledge to the new generation; [a chance to] offer new experiences for youth; opportunity to share their experiences, expertise and to make a real difference in a young person's life; a chance to share their skills and knowledge (sharing their wisdom).

For older people: Individual development  n=2
A sense that they have something of value to share (not wealth); sense of being valued for what they can provide to younger ones and that sharing their wisdom out of their life experience is benefiting the community.

For young people: Interpersonal development  n=3
Share gifts; opportunity to discuss their faith; to benefit from the wisdom of the mentor.

**Increased sense of purpose**

For older people: Interpersonal development  n=4
Sense of purpose and nurturing - the growth of the church; opportunity for ministry; opportunity to be of service, if they have the time to do so; opportunities to be leaders.

For Older People: Individual development  n=8
Sense of purpose, ministry; meaning and purpose in their Christian lives; satisfaction from a ministry; purpose in life; fulfilment; increased sense of worth (being needed); sense of self-worth; develop self-worth.

For Young People – Individual Development  n=2
[Sense of] purpose which many young people lose at this age; some direction in "church life".

Planning for succession

For older people: Interpersonal development  n=1
Opportunity to pass on traditions.

For older people: Individual development  n=1
A sense of contribution to the future of the parish.

For young people: Interpersonal development  n=1
Introduction to some parish activities (jobs).
APPENDIX 3

Parish Bulletin Analysis

n = 45 bulletins from 5/2/06 – 10/12/06

Key:

*Adult/generic  +youth or children’s activity  ++activity related to the current study

**Advertised Parish Activities – Faith and Spirituality-related**

*Pastoral assistant meetings
*Education for ministry
Community playgroup
*Mother’s union
*Caritas
*Lent Study Groups
Communication committee
+Angel’s Choir (Christmas)
+Young Disciples
+Creche
+Live 13
*Anglican Board of Missions
*Meditation Group
*Choir
*Ladies’ Guild
*Prayer Chain
*Anglican Mens’ Society
Coffee, Craft and conversation club
Work group
Parish Council

Total: 11 adult groups, 2 children’s groups, 1 children/youth activities, 1 youth group

**Outside Invitations – Faith or Spirituality based**

*History Society “Our Daily Bread” picnic
*ABM: Annual Lent Dinner
*Hymns of Praise
Midnight youth theatre – adults and children
*Ecumenical fellowship dinner
*A day of prayer for mission
*RSCM school
+Impact world tour – Youth with a mission
*Wollaston Summer school
New Norcia art exhibition
+Scripture Union Summer Camps – primary and secondary aged
Anglican knit
*Companions of Christ
*Farewell Eucharist for the bishop
Learning about Diabetes seminar – over 50’s
Interchange volunteers
+Youthsurge – young people
Como parish arts and crafts festival
*Women in the Wings Mowatch Conference
*100 year celebration at All Saints Parish Belmont – Mother’s Union members
Sharing our stories – Building the reconciliation bridge
*BREAKfast for World Vision
Centre for Ethics – Christchurch Grammar
*World Chamber of Churches Day of Prayer for Peace
*Women and Ministry Forum
*Women’s Cursillo
Mentoring in local primary schools workshop
*Music of the Spirit workshop
School chaplaincy fundraiser
*Council of Christians and Jews meeting

Totals: 17 adult/generic invitations, 3 invitations that include youth or youth activities

Parish Invitations

+Parish choir (included an invite to young people)
Community playgroup
*Lent study groups
Rosters
Lavender party
AMS – River Boat Jazz Cruise
*Parish Quiet Day
Caritas dementia talk
Coffee, craft and conversation
Top Shop Autumn Fashion Parade
Annual Meeting of Parishioners
++Camp and Retreat Day (Youth Focus Groups)
Brain Storm Quiz Night – children and adults
Ladies Guild Soup and Sandwiches lunch
AMS St Oswalds Dinner (Husbands, wives and friend)
*Godly Play training
Craft morning – Uthando project
*Mother’s Union service – Fellowship of marriage or Mothers Union members
Summer/Spring Fashion Parade
*Evensong – traditional
+Welcome to Holy Communion Group (children and young people)
*Small group bible studies
Mentoring projects: Sound and data projector training (all ages), Supagolf (ages 6+)
*Godly Play lunch
+Server training (Years 5, 6, and 7, secondary school aged)
Ballroom and Latin dance fundraiser
Muntunga Challenge
CYMC farewell
Assistant priest farewell

Totals:
7 adult/generic invitations, 3 invitations that include youth or youth activities

Youth Participation

- No notices of weekly youth activities in the pew sheet. Only notice of *Live* being in recess (23/7, 30/7, 6/8, 13/8, 20/8, 27/8, 13/8, 20/8, 27/8, 8/10, 15/10). Youth activities advertised separately. These include Sunday morning discussion group during church services and Saturday evening fun activities like pool, PS2 nights, lawn bowls, indoor soccer, chill-out nights.

- One notice from a young person working with her mother to raise money for Anglican Board of Missions (19/11)

- Invitations to young people for choir and serving (usually adults-only)

- Offer to mentor people of “all ages” to use sound and data projector equipment (8/10)* A young person was the mentor.

- Notice about Children and Youth Recreation Areas (19/2)

“A group has been put together from various members of the parish community to investigate how we can better meet the needs of all the kids of various ages who use the hall. We are excited about working to make positive changes so that all children feel valued through having a welcoming space appropriate to them: The members of the group are…[4 adults – One older male, one older female, two middle-aged females].”
APPENDIX 4

Observations in the Parish Hall

- When: Gathered after three church services during the survey month.
- Site: Parish hall during morning tea.
- What: I observed who young people spoke to and for how long.
- Key to young person interactions/conversations: Short (less than one minute), medium (between one minute and two minutes) or long (two minutes or more).

7/4/06

1. Two young people spoke to one another whilst caring for a young child (long)
2. An adult tied up a shoe-lace for a young person (short)
3. Three young people in a conversation outside of the hall on the steps (long)
4. A young person played with a child (long)
5. A three-way conversation occurred between two young people and a member of clergy (short)
6. A three-way conversation occurred between two young people and the CYMC (short)

21/4/06

1. A conversation occurred between a young person and an adult (long)
2. A three-way interaction occurred between a parent and an adult with the young person observing and interacting occasionally (short)
3. A three-way interaction occurred between a parent and an adult with the young person observing (short)
4. An interaction occurred between the CYMC and a parent with the young person observing (short)
5. An interaction occurred between a young person and their parent (short)
6. An interaction occurred between a young person and a child (long)
7. An conversation occurred between two young people (long)
8. An interaction occurred between two adults, a parent and a young person with the young person speaking to one adult briefly (short)
9. An interaction occurred between one adult, the CYMC and two young people with one young person speaking to the CYMC briefly (short)
10. A young person speaking with a child (short)
11. A young person playing with a child (medium)

28/4/06
1. Two young people had a conversation (short)
2. A young person spoke with the CYMC (short)
3. A group of 5 young people spoke with each other, the CYMC and his wife (long)

Summary

Youth-CYMC/Clergy 6  
Youth-youth interactions 4  
Youth-child 4  
Parent-adult-youth 3  
Youth-adult 2  
Youth-parent 1

Young people most often interact with the CYMC (and occasionally clergy) either alone or with others present. Interactions between youth and the CYMC/clergy tended to be short but one long conversation occurred between the CYMC, his wife and a group of 5 young people.

Young people often interact with each other alone with longer interactions being more common.

Young people often interact with children with longer interactions being more common.

Young people often interact other adults in the parish via adult and parent conversations. These interactions tend to be short.

Young people occasionally interact with adults independently. One young person was observed to have a long conversation with an adult whilst another had a short interaction with an adult.

One young person interacted with their parent for a short time.

Setting: Many parishioners go to the church hall after the 9:30am service to have a cup of tea and a chat. I observed this setting three times during the survey month (from the end of the church service until the hall was empty – approximately an hour each time). On the three occasions, there were approximately 40 adults in the hall and 1-4 young people. Two additional young people were occupied with the parish crèche each Sunday. They were situated in the hall-foyer and were not included in the observations since they were not visible to me when I was in the hall. However, I observed one of the crèche young people talking with other young people alone or with the CYMC on a number of occasions, as I was walking through that area.
My additional observations: two adults in particular sustained long conversations with young people in the hall after church services. Both adults were older (one male, one female) These conversations occurred with 1 young person who demonstrated very well developed social skills. My formal observations revealed that short interactions frequently occurred between young people and adults via parent-adult conversations or through young people undertaking activities such as selling chocolates. Young people appeared to be comfortable approaching the CYMC or the parish rector frequently, with most interactions in the hall being short. However, long conversations did occur between the CYMC and young people. Young people also appeared to be comfortable talking with the CYMC’s wife who often helped at youth group meetings or had young people in her home. The CYMC and his wife also had a young child and young people often cared for him after church services. Young people often interacted with children in the parish but playing with them or conversing with them.
APPENDIX 5

Concerns about a Decrease in Youth Participation

A community of all ages

Middle Adults n=10

A community is all ages - if you don't include youth then you don't have a whole community with the richness that provides; also to feel a sense of belonging in the church, the world; attachment (to a 'family'); connectedness (to a body of support who care for them); each [age group] should have a strong sense of belonging and place; I believe a healthy and vibrant parish community should be represented by all age groups; I believe that a thinking and inclusive parish should include all ages; I feel as with people of any age, there is great benefit in belonging to and being involved in the parish community for… mutual support and encouragement; I would not be happy with any part of the community decreasing their participation; involvement of young people helps to build sense of belonging to the wider church 'family'; need a balance of children, youth, adults in each church to function well and get input from different age groups; we are a family of God, all are welcome, young and old; young people are an important part of the community.

Older People n=3

So that we don't give the impression that church is only for older people; our parish is a community of believers - a family - all ages should be represented; they should simply be part of the parish, not a separate group.

Demise of the Anglican Church

Young People n=1

Lack of faith amongst the younger generation

Middle Adults n=12

What about our future?: ageing church - no future; decrease in church membership in the future; eventual dying out of the parish; I feel that we are at an unacceptable level already, a decrease would be drastic!; that after Sunday School age the young people will drift away; that the parish community would be aging and slowly dying; that youth would be "lost" to the parish and to their Anglican connections and way of life permanently; there would be an even greater lack of vibrancy; they may become disinterested and disillusioned with the church; unhealthy/dying
community; we can't care and support if there is no one to care and support; without them the community is not viable.

**Older People n=10**

Because at the moment it is minimal; because if they are not coming the there is a danger that the church may close eventually; it would be a turn off for the young; it would imply that the church has lost its significance in young lives and that could be carried into future generations; loss of total families; loss of youth participation has to indicate a backward step in the life of the church and church family; older people are most likely to reject new ideas; that the Anglican/Christian church was seen as irrelevant by the youth; the church would be in danger of stagnating without the lively curiosity and vigour of young people - and where would the church be when we oldies die out?; there will be more chaos around the community.

**Future (Youth are our future)**

**Young People n=1**

Youth participation reflects the future of the church; we must establish a healthy youth presence now in order to secure a future for the Anglican Church.

**Middle Adults n=7**

Because young people are our future leaders; future of and viability of the parish and Anglican communion in general; our children (youth are our future!); Our youth is our future; They [yp] are also the future of the parish; they are our future; we need to continue beyond our present time

**Older People n=6**

I feel that the parish needs youthful participation to keep the conggregation flowing; the future of the church and parish is young people; the youth are the 'oncoming' congregations of the future - the future 'mothers and fathers' of children to whom we instill the love and knowledge of our faith; they are literally the future of the church, of Christianity; we need more youth; youth are the future of the church.
Loss of Relationship

Young People n=1
I think that our youth community at the moment is small and very tightly knit, and we would really miss anyone who left, or miss the opportunity to see each other and work together.

Middle Aged People n=1
Loss of relationships (generational); loss of understanding of youth issues.

Older People n=1
Increase in Generation Gap

Mission (Youth are part of our mission)

Middle Aged People n=11
For one's personal growth in the faith; a decrease would indicate care and support is not being provided by the parish; an absence of youth raises questions regarding the 'purpose'; Australia needs Christian youth, Anglican included; drawing them into the community and helping them to flourish is an important part of our mission; it is essential that young people are nurtured and can feel comfortable and supported on their spiritual journey; spiritual (keeping the focus 'Christian'); the parish has the responsibility to support and care for young people; the young people need involvement to grow spiritually and personally; they are our future and faith and belief help you to cope with life; they need to feel welcome and to begin their faith journey; we are not meeting the needs of young people which effects the whole community.

Older People n=9
I would be happy to see any increase in activity which aided their own Christian formation; if they [yp] do not participate at [this parish] they may seek some other place or church where they can participate and feel valued; indication that the younger member don't feel welcome/valued; it would reflect a lack of concern or interest for the welfare of the young people of the parish.; it would reflect an exclusive and unwelcoming attitude on our past.; my concern would be for those young people whose parents are both to give their children spiritual development and a sense of well being; that we as a church community had failed to include and encourage our Youth to participation in the Life and Work of the Parish; there is a great need for the message of Jesus in Western society; young and old should participate in the life of the church in order to grow as a christian; young people are the future of the Anglican Church in its Christian witness; this is of paramount importance in building up the body of Christ; youth need spiritual guidance.
Needs (of youth)

Middle Adults n=1
Youth needs unmet.

Older People n=2
They [YP] need their special interest(s) to be encouraged and supported; we need to find out what is important to the youth of the parish.

Opportunity or involvement

Middle Adults n=7
Everyone has the right to be involved and included; for the new programmes discussed in the survey to continue in the community participation is of utmost importance; I would feel uncomfortable if the participation of the youth who are in the parish decreased - it should increase significantly, but I would not feel uncomfortable if there were fewer youth actually in the parish; if the decrease occurred due to a lack of opportunity I would be extremely concerned; Involvement gives a sense of ownership - leading to more involvement through greater knowledge of need/ benefit/ sense of giving/ "feel good", etc; participation shows a willingness and acceptance of our youth; that the youth were feeling unwanted and undervalued and therefore giving up parish activity; their involvement helps make 'new'/other young people feel at home in the church.

Older People n=3
However small the numbers youth inclusion must be encouraged; I would want a greater number to be engaged - a critical mass will encourage more to be involved; my desire would be that they be encouraged to participate wherever possible.

Succession

Middle Adults n=1
We need to retain our depth of knowledge and pass it on.

Older People n=3
Joining in any group helps younger people to learn about what goes on.; That with so many elderly members, there is a definite need for younger generation to take over.; We need young people to come along to gradually take over duties of older people, to keep Anglican faith from disappearing.
Visibility (of youth)

Middle Adults n=3
I like the youth services, especially the great music. Not crazy about hymns in other services; I love seeing and hearing youth in our parish and; to see less of them would make the parish see less of me; Youth service should be full participation in the service, music, serving, welcoming people, readings and prayers (intercessions).

Older People n=3
Because I never see any youth participation in the 7:45 service; I would like to see them take more responsibility in all areas of church life, even cleaning, teas, etc.; I would like to see young people and children reading lessons, serving, welcoming.
Survey Respondents Who Expressed Concerns About Youth Participation

Increasing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of concern</th>
<th>Middle aged people</th>
<th>Older people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It will challenge us n=2</td>
<td>But happy n=1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It will challenge us n=1</td>
<td>I have concerns that our services would become too light. We need to retain our depth of knowledge and pass it on. n=1</td>
<td>That realistic expectations of participation and preparation is essential - i.e. reading ability, voice skills, presentation, etc. If the style of worship became too immature/noisy/Pentecostal with not enough depth of thought or reflection or study of scripture. n=2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The quality of worship may decrease</td>
<td>It depends on what age (12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 different to 18-25). This should mean an introduction to adult worship not a dumbing down of worship for everyone. Let them have their milk but train them for meat. n=2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth may be too immature to participate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: n=7. No young people expressed concerns about youth participation increasing.